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JONATHAN SWIFT

*From an engraving by E. Scriven after F. Bindon*



# Selections from Swift

*Chosen and edited by*

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## INTRODUCTION

JONATHAN SWIFT

### I

THE story of Jonathan Swift's life is fully told in his writings. They form a complete picture of his actions, his thoughts and his personality. They grew out of his own experiences, his connections with his fellow-men, and above all, out of the part he played in the political life of his day. Hardly anything he wrote bears that impersonal stamp which we associate with the works of Shakespeare and many other famous writers. In all his works, Swift wears his heart upon his sleeve. Even the veil of irony and mordant satire, of grim allegory and grotesque figure in which he chose to clothe his passions and his fancies, is part of his character and his life. Such a writer is necessarily exposed to all the shafts in the armoury of criticism ; not even his heel remains invulnerable. Probably no other English writer has a character of such complexity as Swift, and the estimates of that character sound every note in the scale of values from hero-worship to unmitigated abuse.

Jonathan Swift was born in Dublin in the year 1667. It was a fitting birthplace for one who was to go down to history as the staunch, unwavering champion of Irish liberties. He was educated in Ireland, first at Kilkenny School where he was contemporary with the dramatist Congreve, whose friendship he retained for many years, and then at Trinity College. As his father had died before he was born, Swift's education was at the cost of an uncle, and this early dependence on others left a deep scar on his proud and sensitive heart. His first employment in England was as secretary to Sir William Temple at Moor Park, Surrey. Sir William Temple, the husband of Dorothy Osborne, the accomplished and famous

letter-writer, was a man of varied, if mediocre, talents. He had much success as a diplomatist, was a graceful amateur of letters and a courtier of the old school. He seems to have treated Swift with condescension, and Swift felt keenly the servitude of his position. Perhaps he exaggerated it in retrospect. At any rate, although he edited the memoirs of his patron, and defended him with spirit in a barren controversy concerning the relative merits of classical and modern learning, his dislike for the family increased with years, and resulted finally in complete alienation. Swift was always prone to imagine a slight. Even in his early days, his mind seems to have brooded over misfortunes with something of a morbid intensity. The more he brooded, the more sullen and angry he became, until the pressure of his emotions found relief in satire or abuse. At Moor Park he read widely in classics and history. He had never possessed one of those disciplined minds that secure marked success in examinations : rather he followed the whim and fancy of the moment. In literature as in life, his interests were narrow, his prejudices wide : his sympathies casual and few, his antipathies many and deep.

Swift gained other benefits than those of the study of books at Temple's house. He came into close contact with many men of fame, and it may be that here were laid the foundations of that interest in politics which was to shape his whole career. Even at this period, however, he expressed a contempt for the politician's method. In some verses addressed to his patron he speaks of

The wily shafts of state, those juggler's tricks  
Which we call deep designs and politics.

Before Swift finally left Moor Park on the death of Temple in 1699, he had paid two short visits to Ireland and had been ordained priest. In 1701 he took his Doctor's degree at Dublin University, and three years later published *The Battle of the Books* (written 1697) and *A Tale of a Tub*. The latter was in

some respects the greatest satire he ever wrote. Years later, when turning over the pages of this book, he remarked, with obvious sincerity, 'What a genius I had when I wrote that book!' But it was not his first contribution to the discussion of the problems of his day. In 1701 he had written a work entitled *A Discourse on the Dissensions in Athens and Rome*, a pamphlet ostensibly composed in defence of the Whig Lord-Chancellor, Somers, but in reality a powerful plea for the theory of the balance of political parties.

Between the two great parties of Swift's day, the Whigs and the Tories, there was an unbridgeable gulf. Their policies were diametrically opposed. The Tories stood out above everything else for the maintenance of peace abroad and the pre-eminence of the Church of England. They drew their main support from the country gentlemen and the country clergy. The Whigs on the other hand were whole-heartedly in favour of war with France, and instituted themselves as the protectors of the Dissenters. They were supported in the main by the great landowners, and by a rapidly growing and influential section, the commercial class in the towns. Swift's position in regard to the two parties was a curious one. Nominally on the side of the Whigs, he shows, even in his earliest works, sympathies with the policies of the Tories, particularly in affairs relating to the Church. He hated the Dissenters with a fanatic's zeal, and as a clergyman, he considered himself bound in honour to fight for the privileges of the Church. His first pamphlet, the *Discourse* mentioned above, was written on behalf of the Whigs. Gradually, and not without many misgivings, he drew closer and closer to the Tory side, until finally, he became the mouthpiece and champion of their cause. But the change of party, which has been construed by some into a charge of inconsistency and insincerity, was natural and inevitable. His Whiggism was rather the product of his early environment than the conscientious and deliberate choice of a mature and free mind.

The years following the publication of *A Tale of a Tub* were,

in one sense, uneventful. Party struggles still continued, and political and religious questions were debated, but Swift, as yet unfettered by any direct allegiance to party, passed his days in study and quiet, in visiting friends at home and in the quiet seclusion of his Irish parish of Laracor. He formed at this period one of the most absorbing friendships of his life, and one to which he always refers with pride and gratitude. This was his friendship with Addison, the fine scholar, the brilliant writer and the doyen of Whig pamphleteers. Swift's pages teem with records of this friendship, and even in the alienation that followed in later years, his mind goes back in tender recollection to those days of unsullied companionship. Congreve, the dramatist, Prior, Ambrose Philips and the genial Richard Steele were members too of Swift's circle. One or two survived the buffetings of party strife, but the majority in the course of time were drawn into the vortex and submerged. The society of Grub Street hacks and coffee-house wits, of political intriguers and scheming courtiers, in which Swift moved, the arbiter and censor of thought and taste, has been painted for us by Thackeray, in *Henry Esmond*, in immortal colours.

In the country itself during these years, the chief item of interest was the wonderful success of Marlborough in the French wars. Blenheim, Malplaquet and the other splendid victories had fired the popular imagination, made Marlborough the idol of the hour, and strengthened the Whig supremacy. But Swift was, for the time, engrossed in Church affairs. He wrote many pamphlets on Church questions, nearly all imbued with subtle humour, keen irony and amusing satire. Preferment did not come his way though it must have been expected. Perhaps his wit and cleverness were too much, even for his friends, and it was whispered that the Queen had grave suspicions of the orthodoxy of a man who could write such a book as *A Tale of a Tub*.

The year 1708 saw the publication of one of Swift's most humorous sallies, *Predictions for the Year 1708*, by Isaac



*Bickerstaff.* These predictions were written in imitation of the quack astrologers of the day, among whom was the notorious John Partridge, a shoemaker. This man had considerable vogue among the credulous, and Swift must have thought that this foolery had reached its limit, or possibly this little composition merely represented the idle thoughts of an idle fellow glad to find relaxation in a practical joke. In his *Predictions* he prophesied the death of Partridge 'on the 29th of March next, about 11 o'clock at night, of a raging fever.' Swift followed this up by a *Letter to a Person of Honour*, in which he described with some detail Partridge's death, exactly as it had been predicted. These sallies took the town by storm, and the fun was increased when Partridge, in his almanac for 1709, solemnly denied his death, and denounced the pretensions of the new prophet. After a mock-serious rejoinder from Swift, the jest died away, but so deep had been the impression made on the town that Steele asked for, and obtained, permission to use the name, Bickerstaff, in the new paper he was launching, *The Tatler*.

These years were spent in comparative quiet. Unfortunately Swift's health was never robust. As early as 1690, when he was only twenty-three years of age, he had been attacked by giddiness and deafness. These distressing symptoms recurred at intervals, and left in their wake lassitude and depression. They were a source of great mental worry to Swift, and undoubtedly increased his irritability and tendency to moroseness. But he moved in a circle of brilliant wits to whom he acted as mentor and guide. He assisted Steele in the writing of *The Tatler*: he discoursed with Addison: he sat for his portrait to Jervas and he kept up a humorous correspondence with many friends. He was an inveterate punster in an age when punning was held in rather higher esteem than it is to-day. 'A gentleman,' he writes to Archdeacon Wells, 'was mightily afeard of a cat. I told him it was a sign he was *pus*-illanimous. And Lady Berkeley, talking to her cat, my Lord said she was very impertinent, but I defended

her and said, "I thought her Ladyship spoke very much to the *poor-pus*."

There were great changes in the political world in 1710. Enthusiasm for war was waning before rising prices and scarcity of corn; and then, as always, all ills were laid at the door of the government. There were murmurings among the people, deep discontent and a disposition for change. Two events, in themselves trifling, were the sparks that set the smouldering disaffection aflame. On the 5th of November, 1709, Dr. Sacheverell of St. Saviour's, Southwark, preached a sermon in St. Paul's on 'The Perils of False Brethren both in Church and State.' The sermon was printed and roused wide attention. Its political significance was obvious. It attacked the Dissenters, and the toleration that the Whigs had granted them. It was a manifesto of the High Church-Tory party, and contained a thinly-veiled attack on Godolphin, the Lord Treasurer. A prosecution followed, and in March, Sacheverell was suspended for three years, and the sermon was ordered to be burnt by the hangman. But Sacheverell was the hero of the hour. Bonfires were lit in his honour, processions promenaded the streets, crowds followed him whenever he appeared in public, and finally, dissenting chapels were pillaged and despoiled. The second incident, less spectacular, was quite as effective in stirring up enmity against the Whigs. Marlborough, the idol of many years, asked for himself the post of Captain General for life. The scheme failed; the Duchess of Marlborough was deposed as the favourite of the Queen, and universal distrust added fuel to the flames. The Whigs fell. Robert Harley became the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Henry St. John became Secretary of State.

Swift, who was in Ireland during these stirring times, returned to find what he describes as 'a new world.' He at once threw in his lot with the Tory party, and placed his pen at the disposal of Harley. In November, 1710, he began to write for *The Examiner*, a paper founded by St. John for the exposition of Tory principles. Swift was now on terms of

equality with the greatest in the land, and he exacted from all, even the powerful, due recognition of his talents. There are many playful references in his *Journal to Stella* to his impish delight in bringing to their knees the high and mighty. Perhaps the recollection of his own dependence in his University days and during his residence at Moor Park added to the peculiar pleasure he derived from the patronage of the powerful. Once he returned with much indignation a present of £50 which Harley had sent him. But however much he enjoyed the experience, his friends, on their side, were equally pleased to have Swift as their ally and champion. The Tories at the time were making a bold bid for peace. Swift was their leading advocate, and his powerful pen gained fresh adherents to his party. Finally in *The Conduct of the Allies*, he definitely paved the way for peace, and although the die-hard element in the party, known as the October Club, made negotiations difficult, and harassed Harley with their extremist attitude, peace was signed at Utrecht in 1713.

It was peace for England but not for Swift. For some time it had been obvious, even to those in authority, that unless some preferment were given to Swift, his position as a mere literary appendage of the Ministry was untenable. At length, after many abortive attempts, he was presented with the Deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin. After an open breach with Steele, he left England in June 1713, and finally settled in Dublin in August of the following year. The symptoms of political unrest, discernible even when the treaty was signed, became more acute as months rolled by. Swift's leaders, Harley (now Lord Oxford) and St. John (now Viscount Bolingbroke) had for some time been drawing apart. After an open quarrel, Bolingbroke succeeded in driving his rival from power. But it was a short-lived triumph. The death of the Queen and the accession of the Hanoverians dealt a death-blow to the Tories, and the Whigs assumed a control that lasted for many years. This violent upheaval seemed to Swift the overthrow of liberty and of all those principles which he had

championed so stoutly and so long. He went to Ireland, a melancholy and bewildered man. He took possession of a vast, unfurnished house, among people and officials with whom he was personally unpopular. But Ireland was now definitely Swift's home, and he soon found in Irish politics ample verge and room enough for his amazing talents in controversy and satire. Before, however, this phase of his career may be discussed, it is necessary to treat in outline a chapter in Swift's history that throws some light on his character and his works.

At Moor Park there had lived a Mrs. Johnson, the wife of a confidential servant to Sir William Temple. She had two young daughters, the elder of whom, Esther, was eight years old when Swift, at the age of 22, took up residence at Moor Park. Swift seems to have been attracted to her at once. He became her favourite playfellow, and acted as her tutor during the whole of his stay at Sir William Temple's house. Stella, as Esther Johnson is now known to the world through the immortal letters that Swift wrote to her, is described as having 'hair blacker than a raven and every feature of her face in perfection.' 'She was one of the most beautiful, graceful and agreeable young women in London.' These are the tributes paid by Swift, and indicate how close were the ties that bound the two. To her, even in her youth, Swift submitted his plans and ideas : from her he begged advice and sought counsel in literary and political matters. 'I cannot call to mind,' he says, writing after her death, 'that I ever once heard her make a wrong judgment of persons, books or affairs. Her advice was always the best, and with the greatest freedom mixed with the greatest decency. She had a gracefulness somewhat more than human, in every motion, word and action. Never was so happy a conjunction of civility, freedom, easiness and sincerity.'

During one of Swift's short visits to England, he suggested to Stella that she and her friend, Mrs. Dingley, should come and stay in Ireland. Sir William Temple on his death had left Stella a small legacy, part of which consisted of a farm in

Ireland. Swift proposed the change of residence ostensibly on the score of cheapness in living, but there must also have been a desire to have her near him. By degrees, Stella became the centre of Swift's circle, but they never met alone and never lived in the same house. Why then did Swift not propose marriage? In a letter to Dr. Tisdall who, himself at this time, proposed marriage to Stella, Swift makes it quite plain that he prefers Stella to all other women, but that neither his own fortune nor his own humour allowed him to think of marriage.

Meanwhile Swift entered heart and soul into the political life he had chosen for himself, and in his letters to Stella, written between September 1710 and June 1713, he recorded the daily events in which he played so prominent a part. This *Journal to Stella* is one of the most remarkable personal documents in history. Actuated by feelings of the strongest friendship and esteem, he gave to Stella graphic and humorous accounts of his actions and thoughts, his friends and enemies, his hopes and fears, his aims and ambitions. Every day, no matter how strenuous the programme, he entered up his *Journal* when the day's work was done and despatched the letters to Stella. In form he addressed them to Stella and Mrs. Dingley, but this was a mere formality designed to still the voice of gossip. Many of the letters contain nursery babble—the 'little language' as Swift called it—and capital letters, used, as it were in cipher, but fully intelligible, we may be sure, to the correspondents. The *Journal* reveals the human side of Swift, and the letters often show a vivacity and grace and tenderness that are unfortunately absent from most of his writings.

But the course of this strange alliance was not to run in smooth and unbroken channels. In 1708 Swift had met a Mrs. Vanhomrigh, the widow of a Dutch merchant. The acquaintance ripened into friendship, and in his letters we hear much of regular visits paid to her house in London. Mrs. Vanhomrigh's daughter, Hester, shared in these entertainments, and by degrees gained Swift's intimacy. Letters passed

between them, full of playful banter on the part of Swift, but full of a deeper feeling on the part of the girl. She asks about his illness, tells him of her reading and assumes an interest in his political flights. Slowly it appears to have dawned on Swift that Hester, or Vanessa, as she afterwards came to be known, was really in love with him. Soon after he had taken up his residence in Ireland in 1714, Vanessa followed. Swift tried by coolness, by discretion and by banter to check her passion, but it was of no avail. What had begun as the friendship of a literary guide developed on her side into passionate love. Stella too was near at hand, and knew something of the state of affairs. Swift, to justify himself, wrote in 1713 a poem, *Cadenus and Vanessa*,<sup>1</sup> explaining for Vanessa's benefit alone the story of her infatuation. For a time Vanessa seems to have been satisfied, but the position was a delicate one.

In 1716, Swift and Stella entered into some sort of bond, full details of which are lacking. By some biographers it is roundly asserted that the two were married by Dr. Ashe, the Bishop of Clogher. By others the marriage is denied. The evidence on neither side is conclusive. At any rate the two continued to live on the same terms as they had always lived, apart, occasionally meeting, but never together alone. Vanessa may or may not have known of this. Finally, however, in a fit of jealousy, she wrote to Stella asking her if she was the wife of Swift. Stella sent the letter to Swift. He in turn, bitterly angry, rode over to Vanessa's house, threw the envelope on the table without a word, rode back to the Deanery and never saw her again. Vanessa survived the blow only a few weeks. During that time she revoked a will originally made in Swift's favour, and left injunctions to her executors to publish *Cadenus and Vanessa*. She died in 1723, at the age of 33, and the shock drove Swift to the south of Ireland.

He soon returned to Dublin and, as far as one can judge, relations were resumed with Stella on the same footing as

<sup>1</sup>Cadenus is an anagram of Decanus, the Dean, and Vanessa is Hussy with the first syllable of Vanhomrigh prefixed.

before. Swift did not see her any more frequently, and some of their correspondence was conducted through a third party. It is only possible to guess the reason why Swift did not publicly announce their marriage, if this had taken place, and there is, perhaps, strong presumptive evidence in its favour. It may have been his cold temperament; it may have been reluctance to jeopardise his own career; it may have been mistrust of his own power to make their marriage a happy and complete union. Whatever the cause, Stella's health broke down, and during the weary years that followed, while Swift was becoming the idol of the Irish people, a mortifying bitterness gnawed at the heart of the forsaken woman, who watched, with patience and resignation, the gradual dissolution of a cherished hope. It would not be just to imagine that Swift was indifferent to the situation. Stella's ill-health was a constant source of anxiety, and yet he never took the one step that might have alleviated her suffering, and perhaps indeed have given her new life.

The end came in 1728, in Stella's forty-seventh year. Swift was not present when she died: his agitated soul could not face the sorrows of farewell. But when the vesper shades had gathered round the tomb that contained the mortal part of her whom he loved best in the world, the weary and disconsolate heart unburdened its grief in one of the noblest tributes to a woman's memory that love ever penned. The stories of Vanessa and Stella have to be told together, but there is, in essence, little in common between them. Swift's feelings for Stella were deep: they touched and awakened in him the tenderest graces of which his spirit, steeped in the gall of pride and cynicism, was capable: they engrossed him, freed him from his gloomy and repellent self, and made him human and accessible. For Vanessa he had esteem, liking, anything but love. He was genuinely distressed by her infatuation, and if at times he seems to have encouraged it by an indiscretion or an ill-timed levity, at heart he was sorry for her unmerited suffering. There is pathos in Swift's dealings

with Vanessa : there is tragedy in his love and renunciation of Stella.

The Stella episode, all-pervading as it was in Swift's existence, was not of course the only or the most important item of his life in Dublin. With characteristic impetuosity, he rushed at once into the political fray and found ample scope for his wit and pugnacity in conditions near at hand. Many Englishmen before Swift had seen and pitied the woes of Ireland, but no one had taken them so much to heart. He bent every fibre of his being towards bettering the lot of the unfortunate people among whom his labours now rested. Macaulay in the famous third chapter of his *History* has drawn for us a vivid picture of the destitution of the lower ranks in English society in 1685, of illiteracy and brutality among the ruling classes, and of bestial savagery among the wild, free-booting hordes of the North. But England, bad as it was, was a paradise compared with Ireland. Here the ordinary decencies of life hardly existed in certain of the rural areas. Peasants were housed worse than domestic animals are to-day. Jungle law prevailed, filth and squalor bred pestilence and disease, the dead were unburied, and ghoulisn acts of inhuman ferocity were common in every village. Respect for authority was nowhere to be found. An animal and squalid environment had fostered a squalid and imbecile intelligence, and every vestige of human kindness had fled the land. Like the peasants of France two generations later, they appeased their hunger on the raw produce of the fields and quenched their thirst at any foetid stream.

Many causes contributed to this state of affairs, but the discussion of them would be out of place here. Suffice it to say that the curse of absentee landlordism, an evil not entirely eradicated to-day, and a series of repressive Acts passed by the English Government, had been to a certain extent responsible for the poverty of Ireland. The last of these laws had crushed out of existence the woollen manufactures of the country by refusing to allow the manufacturers to export their goods.



Swift now stepped in with a pamphlet, *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* (1720), in which he urges Irishmen to decline to use anything that is not of Irish manufacture. The pamphlet created a stir, and a prosecution was instituted against the publisher, but public opinion was too strong and the action was stopped. Swift, however, was not to be brow-beaten, and circumstances soon arose that presented him with the greatest opportunity he was ever to have of striking a blow for the liberties of Ireland.

In 1722, owing to a great scarcity of copper coinage, a patent was granted to William Wood, an ironmonger, to coin such currency to the value of £108,000. In any case this was absurdly above the needs of the country; but the transaction was not, even for those days, remotely honest. The Duchess of Kendall, a lady of influence at Court, was to receive £10,000 of the plunder, and there is evidence that other intermediaries were to receive various sums for their assistance and complaisance. Besides this, the coin produced was to be of inferior value to the ordinary currency. Swift immediately wrote a pamphlet which took the form of a letter written in the character of M. B. Drapier, to the Irish people. In all, four main letters were written on the subject of Wood's Halfpence, as Swift derisively called the coinage, and before the controversy was finally settled, other but less important letters were added. The English Ministry was compelled to yield in the face of outraged public opinion: the patent was withdrawn and Swift found himself the hero of the hour.

In 1726 Swift visited England. He entered in triumph the old world of politics and literature, from which indeed, by means of intermittent correspondence, he had not been altogether estranged. Arbuthnot, the amiable doctor and sympathetic writer, Pope, Gay, Congreve and Lord Bathurst gave him a warm welcome. With Pope and Arbuthnot he planned the issue of their *Miscellanies*. Gay was composing his *Fables* and Pope his *Dunciad*, and Swift himself was giving the final touches to the one book that alone would make his name

immortal, *Gulliver's Travels*. The book was published in 1726. It took the world by storm, and quickly passed through many editions. In 1727 Swift left England for the last time.

The last chapter in Swift's life can be briefly reviewed. The death of Stella left him a lonely and broken figure, and as time wore on, the old distressing symptoms, giddiness, deafness and failing eyesight, occurred with increasing force. His pen was not idle. He still championed the country of his adoption, and published several pamphlets with all his old irony and pungency of phrase. He ruled his Cathedral with a firm hand, assisted tradesmen and helped the poor with various financial schemes. He corresponded with his friends in England. But he was conscious of waning powers and declining health. 'You are to look upon me,' he wrote to Pope, 'as one going very fast out of the world.' But he was to outlive all his friends. Congreve died in 1728. In 1732 Gay died suddenly from a fever. Two years later Arbuthnot, the kindest of them all, passed away. 'If the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots,' Swift had written some time before, 'I would burn my *Travels*.' The passing of Gay and Arbuthnot affected him deeply. Their deaths, he said, were 'terrible wounds near his heart.' Pope and Swift still continued their friendship, but there was never any deep intimacy between them. There were affectation and insincerity on both sides, and Swift, usually the most charming of correspondents, is nearly always stilted and artificial when writing to Pope. There was something in Pope that froze the genial current of Swift's soul. But Pope too, at the height of his fame in 1738, died in 1744. His death passed unnoticed by Swift. Two years before this, it had been necessary to place him under restraint. He was kindly and gently watched over by his niece, Mrs. Whiteway, but the giant intellect no longer responded, and after an agony of pain followed by a torpor of complete insensibility, he died on the 19th of October, 1745, in his seventy-eighth year. He was buried beside Stella in his own Cathedral. His money he left to a Hospital for Lunatics and Incurables. This final ironic gesture had apparently been

contemplated many years before when he wrote, in the poem on his own death :

He left the little wealth he had  
To build a house for fools and mad,  
And shew'd by one satiric touch  
No nation wanted it so much.

## II

Concerning the character of Dean Swift much has been written, and the estimates of his character are as varied as the writers. Thackeray, Johnson and Macaulay have stressed the less amiable sides. Others, like Scott and Craik, have taken pains to be judicial, and have laid proper emphasis on the more praiseworthy and genial aspects of his career. There is something to be said on both sides. By nature, it can hardly be denied, his cold temper and unconfined humour were the source of much of the bitterness of heart that he displays in many of his works. He had a titanic intellect. Even Dr. Johnson realised that. 'Swift must be allowed,' he wrote, 'for a time to have dictated the political opinions of the English nation.' Unfortunately the humility of heart and tenderness of spirit which might have guided his all-powerful mind into paths of peace and philanthropy were not there. Neither had he that almost divine aloofness that would have enabled him to say, like Landor, 'I fought with none, for none was worth my strife.' Paradoxical as it seems, he deliberately chose the path of solitariness, and at the same time engaged himself with the thoughts, actions, beliefs and policies of everybody. He is a literary figure, and yet a literary figure without any feeling for the spiritual and aesthetic side of literature. Perhaps, as Tacitus wrote of Agricola, he was unfortunate in the age in which he lived. On every side of him were examples gross as earth to earn his contempt and excite his derision. And yet the humanising influence of the masters whom he had read and studied, seems to have passed him by, untouched and unaffected.

In his earlier works his wit is often fanciful and light, but as time wore on, the iron entered his soul, and the tolerant Horatian smile gives place to harsh ironic laughter. Perhaps the buds of love and gentleness were blasted by the storms that surged around him even in his early years. Perhaps his latter-day cynicism was rather a product of his experience than an inherent trait in his character. We do not know. The place-seeking and temporising of Ministers and officials, the shiftiness and greed and struggle for advancement, the spite and pettiness of Church dignitaries and politicians soured and embittered his judgment of mankind. Undoubtedly his anger was real and fierce, and got out of control the more he brooded over the littleness of man. This explains the tumultuous exaggeration that disfigures nearly all his finest writing. Reason, reasonableness, even accuracy were all swallowed up in the impetuous teeming waves of passion that surged with titanic fury through his mind. As Thackeray wrote, 'It is a Samson with a bone in his hand, rushing on his enemies and felling them.' It is not to be wondered at that such a writer was feared more than he was esteemed by contemporaries. It was not that they had any objection to reform: they merely objected to the reformer's method.

But to describe Swift as 'a lonely eagle chained behind the bars' is to close one's eyes to the essential good there was in his character. His love for Stella, whatever one may think of the attendant circumstances, is evidence enough on his behalf. It reveals a heart, tender and sensitive as a poet's, full of human feeling and simple as a child's. In his dealings with friends Swift was kindness itself. It would not be easy to compile a complete list of friends whom he helped, by money, by advice, by instruction, by influence, and in a hundred other ways. Politicians, writers, clergymen, poets, wits and others with no title at all to talent, came under his wing. He pitied distress and gave practical assistance wherever he found it. He stuck to his friends even in the days of adversity. His letters to Oxford when he was cast into the Tower, to Lady

Bolingbroke and the Duchess of Ormond in the days of their husbands' disgrace, are remarkable testimony to his fidelity and fearless loyalty. As Craik remarks, it needed no device but misfortune to melt his cynicism into pity.

• Proud he was, with the type of pride akin to intellectual snobbery. There was no place in his cosmogony for fools and dullards. He pours scorn on the alleged wit of the coffee-house folk and on the pedantries of affected learning. But to call Swift merely proud, only that and nothing more, would be to misinterpret him. His character indeed at many points touches that of Coriolanus. The tragedy of his life was not so much an overweening pride, as self-ignorance. Like Coriolanus he was not, as a rule, overbearing to equals; nor did he resent their advice. But, while he affected to despise the verdict of his fellows and to care nought for the voice of the multitude, public honours, the esteem of the judicious, flattery and adulation were the very breath of his nostrils. Like Coriolanus he chose to act

As if a man were author of himself  
And knew no other kin,

but deep within his heart there was a hunger for home affections and a thirst for that human love that transcends all other earthly gains. Swift was unaware of this, or, if he vaguely suspected its existence, he sought to crush it out of existence under a load of affected misanthropy. The unrelieved and awful horror of the Yahoos, and the heart-rending mockery of 'Vive la bagatelle!' are two phases of this tragic self-ignorance.

Perhaps indeed the best example of this self-ignorance is to be found in the fourth voyage of Lemuel Gulliver. His account of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos is generally supposed to indicate what one can only describe as a diseased state of mind, and to have been Swift's final verdict on humanity. But, as Craik asks, can we believe that Swift was really satisfied with the formal stoicism represented by the Houyhnhnms? That

he considered them the highest type of humanity and that he really thought that life ruled by reason and void of passion, emotion and natural affection was the natural and best existence open to mankind ? Does such a conclusion agree with what we know of Swift, the Swift of Stella's Journal, the generous-hearted friend of poverty and distress, the companion of Addison and Arbuthnot ? Assuredly not. The hand is the hand of Esau but the tones, could we detect them through the thunder of the storm, are the tones of Jacob. The key to the allegory in the land of the Yahoos is not the clue to the author's conclusions : it is, in turn, itself a satire, grim and gruesome, the incidence of which was perhaps hidden from the author himself.

### III

The outstanding feature of Swift's prose style is its clarity, its downright lucidity. Language, construction, rhetorical device, rhythmical effect, all join to produce a well-balanced medium for the expression of the writer's thoughts. One reads Swift without an effort. In this respect he was a child of his age. The eighteenth century was an age of clarity, of more clarity than inspiration. Pope was its high-priest in verse, and Addison its sanest exponent in prose.

Swift was clear, as clear as a man is compelled to be, who utters his thoughts in fourpenny pamphlets designed for general consumption. There is nothing superfluous : there are no imaginative flights, no soarings into the infinite, no raptures of idealism, no fine frenzies of passion : there is just clarity. Swift's prose is an example of the right word in the right place. You will look in vain for the ' *curiosa felicitas* ' of phrase that is to be found even in Addison, but you will not find greater lucidity in Macaulay. There is little ornament : there is none of the divine simplicity of Bunyan : there is nought of the majesty of Milton, but there is a workmanlike adaptation of means to end. Swift's sentences express his meaning fully and completely, and the fancy coined in his brain does not become

debased by its transference to a thousand other brains. It remains at Mint par value.

Ease and flexibility are the two distinguishing marks of Swift's prose. There is never any suspicion of his having 'leaned on his elbow,' and yet at the same time the varying phases of scorn and satire, of appraisement or direct denunciation, the varying moods and temper of the writer are expressed with wonderful and subtle skill. The secret of his power over his readers is to be sought for here. He makes you responsive to every nuance of thought and emotion and draws you with the magic of his pipe into whatsoever region he desires. 'He understands himself,' said Dr. Johnson, 'and his reader always understands him.'

## CHRONOLOGY OF SWIFT'S WORKS

- 1692. Earliest poems.
- 1701. Dissensions at Athens and Rome.
- 1704. Tale of a Tub. Battle of the Books.
- 1708. Argument against abolishing Christianity.  
Project for the Advancement of Religion.  
The Bickerstaff Pamphlets.
- 1711 Sid Hamet's Rod.  
Contributions to the *Examiner*.  
Conduct of the Allies.
- 1712. Letter to the October Club.
- 1713. Importance of the *Guardian*.  
Cadenus and Vanessa.
- 1720. The Universal Use of Irish Manufactures
- 1723-4. Drapier's Letters.
- 1726. Gulliver's Travels.
- 1729. A Modest Proposal for preventing the  
Children of Poor People in Ireland from  
being a burden to their Parents in the  
Country.
- 1731. The Death of Dr. Swift.
- 1733. Rhapsody on Poetry.
- 1735. Four Last Years of the Queen.
- 1736. The Legion Club.



## A TALE OF A TUB

(1704)

OF the general satires, the first in order of time, and in some respects, in order of importance, is *A Tale of a Tub*. The title of the piece is explained in the Author's Preface. 'Seamen have a custom, when they meet a whale, to fling him an empty tub by way of amusement, to divert him from laying violent hands upon the ship.' The story tells how a father, at his death, bequeathed to his three sons, Peter, Martin, and Jack, a wonderful new coat, with instructions how to wear it. Bit by bit the coat is altered by the brothers in spite of instructions to the contrary in the will, by the addition of shoulder-knots, gold lace, silver fringes and so on. At length, Peter, assuming a great importance, turns his brothers out-of-doors. Between Martin and Jack differences soon arise on the question of stripping the coat of all its gew-gaws, and finally Jack leaves his brother and goes his way alone. It is religious allegory. The coat is Christianity, Peter and his additions are the Roman Church, Martin represents the Anglican Church, and Jack the Dissenters. But it is a mistake to suppose that this work is merely or even mainly a religious satire. Indeed the cream of it is to be found in the introductions and the digressions. These are a general satire on the foibles of human nature: vanity, pride, the pedantry of the learned, the worthlessness of fame, the presumptuousness of science, the shallowness of critics, etc. The hack-writers of Grub Street, the members of the Royal Society and the wits of the Coffee-House are all lumped together for castigation. But the satire is good-humoured, almost whimsical in parts, and has nothing of the latter-day cynicism of its author. Swift in fact never wholly recaptured the exquisite tone and pungent raillery of this early work. There are in it many traces of the influence of Butler's *Hudibras*, but they do not affect the genius of the writing. It had a favourable reception, but it puzzled the wiseacres, and possibly, by its apparent irreverence and levity, lost Swift a bishopric.

### THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE POSTERITY

SIR,—I here present your highness with the fruits of a very few leisure hours, stolen from the short intervals of a

S.S.                      A.                      E

world of business, and of an employment quite alien from such amusements as this the poor production of that refuse of time, which has lain heavy upon my hands during a long prorogation of parliament, a great dearth of foreign news, and a tedious fit of rainy weather ; for which, and other reasons, it cannot choose extremely to deserve such a patronage as that of your highness, whose numberless virtues, in so few years, make the world look upon you as the future example to all princes ; for although your highness is hardly got clear of infancy, yet has the universal learned world already resolved upon appealing to your future dictates, with the lowest and most resigned submission ; fate having decreed you sole arbiter of the productions of human wit, in this polite and most accomplished age. Methinks the number of appellants were enough to shock and startle any judge, of a genius less unlimited than yours ; but in order to prevent such glorious trials, the person, it seems, to whose care the education of your highness is committed, has resolved (as I am told) to keep you in almost an universal ignorance of our studies, which it is your inherent birth-right to inspect.

It is amazing to me that this person should have the assurance, in the face of the sun, to go about persuading your highness that our age is almost wholly illiterate, and has hardly produced one writer upon any subject. I know very well, that when your highness shall come to riper years, and have gone through the learning of antiquity, you will be too curious to neglect inquiring into the authors of the very age before you : and to think that this insolent, in the account he is preparing for your view, designs to reduce them to a number so insignificant as I am ashamed to mention ; it moves my zeal and my spleen

for the honour and interest of our vast flourishing body, as well as of myself, for whom, I know by long experience, he has professed, and still continues, a peculiar malice.

It is not unlikely that, when your highness will one day peruse what I am now writing, you may be ready to expostulate with your governor upon the credit of what I here affirm, and command him to show you some of our productions. To which he will answer (for I am well informed of his designs), by asking your highness where they are ? and what is become of them ? and pretend it a demonstration that there never were any, because they are not then to be found. Not to be found ! who has mislaid them ? are they sunk in the abyss of things ? it is certain, that in their own nature, they were light enough to swim upon the surface for all eternity. Therefore the fault is in him, who tied weights so heavy to their heels as to depress them to the centre. Is their very essence destroyed ? who has annihilated them ? were they drowned by purges, or martyred by pipes ? But, that it may no longer be a doubt with your highness, who is to be the author of this universal ruin, I beseech you to observe that large and terrible scythe which your governor affects to bear continually about him. Be pleased to remark the length and strength, the sharpness and hardness of his nails and teeth : consider his baneful, abominable breath, enemy to life and matter, infectious and corrupting : and then reflect whether it be possible for any mortal ink and paper of this generation to make a suitable resistance. O ! that your highness would one day resolve to disarm this usurping *maître du palais* of his furious engines, and bring your empire *hors de page*.

It were needless to recount the several methods of

tyranny and destruction which your governor is pleased to practise upon this occasion. His inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun, there is not one to be heard of: Unhappy infants! many of them barbarously destroyed, before they have so much as learnt their mother tongue to beg for pity. Some he stifles in their cradles; others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die; some he flays alive; others he tears limb from limb. Great numbers are offered to Moloch; and the rest, tainted by his breath, die of a languishing consumption.

But the concern I have most at heart, is for our corporation of poets; from whom I am preparing a petition to your highness, to be subscribed with the names of one hundred and thirty-six of the first rate; but whose immortal productions are never likely to reach your eyes, though each of them is now an humble and earnest appellant for the laurel, and has large comely volumes ready to show, for a support to his pretensions. The never-dying works of these illustrious persons, your governor, sir, has devoted to unavoidable death; and your highness is to be made believe, that our age has never arrived at the honour to produce one single poet.

We confess Immortality to be a great and powerful goddess; but in vain we offer up to her our devotions and our sacrifices, if your highness's governor, who has usurped the priesthood, must, by an unparalleled ambition and avarice, wholly intercept and devour them.

To affirm that our age is altogether unlearned, and devoid of writers in any kind, seems to be an assertion so bold and so false, that I have been some time thinking

the contrary may almost be proved by uncontrollable demonstration. It is true, indeed, that although their numbers be vast, and their productions numerous in proportion, yet are they hurried so hastily off the scene, that they escape our memory, and elude our sight. When I first thought of this address, I had prepared a copious list of titles to present your highness, as an undisputed argument for what I affirm. The originals were posted fresh upon all gates and corners of streets ; but, returning in a very few hours to take a review, they were all torn down, and fresh ones in their places. I inquired after them among readers and booksellers ; but I inquired in vain ; the memorial of them was lost among men ; their places were no more to be found ; and I was laughed to scorn for a clown and a pedant, without all taste and refinement, little versed in the course of present affairs, and that knew nothing of what had passed in the best companies of court and town. So that I can only avow in general to your highness, that we do abound in learning and wit ; but to fix upon particulars, is a task too slippery for my slender abilities. If I should venture in a windy day to affirm to your highness, that there is a large cloud near the horizon, in the form of a bear, another in the zenith, with the head of an ass ; a third to the westward, with claws like a dragon ; and your highness should in a few minutes think fit to examine the truth, it is certain they would all be changed in figure and position ; new ones would arise, and all we could agree upon would be, that clouds there were, but that I was grossly mistaken in the zoography and topography of them.

But your governor perhaps may still insist, and put the question—What is then become of those immense bales of

paper, which must needs have been employed in such numbers of books ? can these also be wholly annihilate, and so of a sudden, as I pretend ? What shall I say in return of so invidious an objection ? Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are ten thousand to go out of it, and return no more.

I profess to your highness, in the integrity of my heart, that what I am going to say is literally true this minute I am writing : what revolutions may happen before it shall be ready for your perusal, I can by no means warrant ; however, I beg you to accept it as a specimen of our learning, our politeness, and our wit. I do therefore affirm, upon the word of a sincere man, that there is now actually in being a certain poet, called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed in a large folio, well bound, and, if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen. There is another, called Nahum Tate, who is ready to make oath that he has caused many reams of verse to be published, whereof both himself and his bookseller (if lawfully required) can still produce authentic copies, and therefore wonders why the world is pleased to make such a secret of it. There is a third, known by the name of Tom Durfey, a poet of vast comprehension, a universal genius, and most profound learning. There are also one Mr. Rymer, and one Mr. Dennis, most profound critics. There is a person styled Dr. Bentley, who has written near a thousand pages of immense erudition, giving a full and true account of a certain squabble, of wonderful importance, between himself and a bookseller : he is a writer of infinite wit and humour ; no man rallies with a better grace, and in more

sprightly turns. Further, I avow to your highness, that with these eyes I have beheld the person of William Wotton, B.D., who has written a good sizeable volume against a friend of your governor (from whom, alas ! he must therefore look for little favour), in a most gentlemanly style, adorned with the utmost politeness and civility ; replete with discoveries equally valuable for their novelty and use ; and embellished with traits of wit, so poignant and so apposite, that he is a worthy yokemate to his forementioned friend.

Why should I go upon further particulars, which might fill a volume with the true eulogies of my contemporary brethren ? I shall bequeath this piece of justice to a larger work, wherein I intend to write a character of the present set of wits in our nation : their persons I shall describe particularly and at length, their genius and understandings in miniature.

In the meantime I do here make bold to present your highness with a faithful abstract, drawn from the universal body of all arts and sciences, intended wholly for your service and instruction : nor do I doubt in the least, but your highness will peruse it as carefully, and make as considerable improvements, as other young princes have already done, by the many volumes of late years written for a help to their studies.

That your highness may advance in wisdom and virtue, as well as years, and at last outshine all your royal ancestors, shall be the daily prayer of,

Sir, your highness's most devoted, etc.

*December, 1697.*

## A TALE OF A TUB

## I

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons by one wife, and all at a birth, neither could the midwife tell certainly which was the eldest. Their father died while they were young ; and upon his death-bed, calling the lads to him, spoke thus :

‘ Sons, because I have purchased no estate, nor was born to any, I have long considered of some good legacies to bequeath you ; and at last, with much care, as well as expense, have provided each of you (here they are) a new coat. Now, you are to understand that these coats have two virtues contained in them ; one is, that with good wearing they will last you fresh and sound as long as you live ; the other is, that they will grow in the same proportion with your bodies, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit. Here ; let me see them on you before I die. So ; very well ; pray, children, wear them clean, and brush them often. You will find in my will (here it is) full instructions in every particular concerning the wearing and management of your coats ; wherein you must be very exact, to avoid the penalties I have appointed for every transgression or neglect, upon which your future fortunes will entirely depend. I have also commanded in my will that you should live together in one house like brethren and friends, for then you will be sure to thrive, and not otherwise.’

Here the story says, this good father died, and the three sons went all together to seek their fortunes.

I shall not trouble you with recounting what adventures



they met for the first seven years, any farther than by taking notice that they carefully observed their father's will, and kept their coats in very good order : that they travelled through several countries, encountered a reasonable quantity of giants, and slew certain dragons.

Being now arrived at the proper age for producing themselves, they came up to town, and fell in love with the ladies, but especially three, who about that time were in chief reputation ; the Duchess d'Argent, Madame de Grands Titres, and the Countess d'Orgueil. On their first appearance our three adventurers met with a very bad reception ; and soon with great sagacity guessing out the reason, they quickly began to improve in the good qualities of the town ; they wrote, and rallied, and rhymed, and sung, and said, and said nothing ; they drank, and fought, and slept, and swore, and took snuff ; they went to new plays on the first night, haunted the chocolate-houses, and beat the watch ; they bilked hackney-coachmen and ran in debt with shopkeepers ; they killed bailiffs, kicked fiddlers down stairs, eat at Locket's, loitered at Will's ; they talked of the drawing-room, and never came there ; dined with lords they never saw ; whispered a duchess, and spoke never a word ; exposed the scrawls of their laundress for billets-doux of quality ; came ever just from court, and were never seen in it ; attended the levee *sub dio* : got a list of peers by heart in one company, and with great familiarity retailed them in another. Above all, they constantly attended those committees of senators who are silent in the House and loud in the coffee-house ; where they nightly adjourn to chew the cud of politics, and are encompassed with a ring of disciples, who lie in wait to catch up their droppings. The three brothers

had acquired forty other qualifications of the like stamp, too tedious to recount, and by consequence were justly reckoned the most accomplished persons in the town ; but all would not suffice, and the ladies aforesaid continued still inflexible. To clear up which difficulty I must, with the reader's good leave and patience, have recourse to some points of weight, which the authors of that age have not sufficiently illustrated.

For about this time it happened a sect arose whose tenets obtained and spread very far, especially in the *grand monde*, and among everybody of good fashion. They worshipped a sort of idol, who, as their doctrine delivered, did daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest part of the house, on an altar erected about three foot ; he was shown in the posture of a Persian emperor, sitting on a superficies, with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign ; whence it is that some learned men pretend to deduce his original from Jupiter Capitolinus. At his left hand, beneath the altar, hell seemed to open and catch at the animals the idol was creating ; to prevent which, certain of his priests hourly flung in pieces of the uninformed mass, or substance, and sometimes whole limbs already enlivened, which that horrid gulf insatiably swallowed, terrible to behold. The goose was also held a subaltern divinity or *deus minorum gentium*, before whose shrine was sacrificed that creature whose hourly food is human gore, and who is in so great renown abroad for being the delight and favourite of the Ægyptian Cercopithecus. Millions of these animals were cruelly slaughtered every day to appease the hunger of that consuming deity. The chief idol was also worshipped

as the inventor of the yard and needle ; whether as the god of seamen, or on account of certain other mystical attributes, has not been sufficiently cleared.

The worshippers of this deity had also a system of their belief, which seemed to turn upon the following fundamentals. They held the universe to be a large suit of clothes, which invests everything ; that the earth is invested by the air ; the air is invested by the stars ; and the stars are invested by the *primum mobile*. Look on this globe of earth, you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land but a fine coat faced with green ? or the sea, but a waistcoat of water-tabby ? Proceed to the particular works of the creation, you will find how curious journeyman Nature has been to trim up the vegetable beaux ; observe how sparkish a periwig adorns the head of a beech, and what a fine doublet of white satin is worn by the birch. To conclude from all, what is man himself but a micro-coat, or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings ? As to his body there can be no dispute ; but examine even the acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order towards furnishing out an exact dress : to instance no more ; is not religion a cloak, honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt, self-love a surtout, vanity a shirt, and conscience a pair of breeches ?

These postulata being admitted, it will follow in due course of reasoning that those beings, which the world calls improperly suits of clothes, are in reality the most refined species of animals ; or, to proceed higher, that they are rational creatures or men. For, is it not manifest that they live, and move, and talk, and perform all other

offices of human life ? are not beauty, and wit, and mien, and breeding, their inseparable proprieties ? in short, we see nothing but them, hear nothing but them. Is it not they who walk the streets, fill up parliament-, coffee-, play-houses ? It is true, indeed, that these animals, which are vulgarly called suits of clothes, or dresses, do, according to certain compositions, receive different appellations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain, and a red gown, and white rod, and a great horse, it is called a lord-mayor : if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge ; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a bishop.

Others of these professors, though agreeing in the main system, were yet more refined upon certain branches of it ; and held that man was an animal compounded of two dresses, the natural and celestial suit, which were the body and the soul : that the soul was the outward, and the body the inward clothing ; that the latter was *ex traduce* ; but the former of daily creation and circumfusion ; this last they proved by scripture, because in them we live, and move, and have our being ; as likewise by philosophy, because they are all in all, and all in every part. Besides, said they, separate these two and you will find the body to be only a senseless unsavoury carcase ; by all which it is manifest that the outward dress must needs be the soul.

To this system of religion were tagged several subaltern doctrines, which were entertained with great vogue : as particularly the faculties of the mind were deduced by the learned among them in this manner ; embroidery was sheer wit, gold fringe was agreeable conversation, gold lace was repartee, a huge long periwig was humour, and a

coat full of powder was very good raillery—all which required abundance of *finesse* and *délicatesse* to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance after times and fashions.

I have, with much pains and reading, collected out of ancient authors this short summary of a body of philosophy and divinity, which seems to have been composed by a vein and race of thinking very different from any other systems either ancient or modern. And it was not merely to entertain or satisfy the reader's curiosity, but rather to give him light into several circumstances of the following story ; that, knowing the state of dispositions and opinions in an age so remote, he may better comprehend those great events which were the issue of them. I advise, therefore, the courteous reader to peruse with a world of application, again and again, whatever I have written upon this matter. And so leaving these broken ends, I carefully gather up the chief thread of my story and proceed.

These opinions, therefore, were so universal, as well as the practices of them, among the refined part of court and town, that our three brother adventurers, as their circumstances then stood, were strangely at a loss. For, on the one side, the three ladies they addressed themselves to, whom we have named already, were ever at the very top of the fashion, and abhorred all that were below it but the breadth of a hair. On the other side, their father's will was very precise ; and it was the main precept in it, with the greatest penalties annexed, not to add to or diminish from their coats one thread, without a positive command in the will. Now, the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and besides so neatly sewn,

you would swear they were all of a piece ; but at the same time very plain, and with little or no ornament : and it happened that before they were a month in town great shoulder-knots came up—straight all the world was shoulder-knots—no approaching the ladies' *ruelles* without the *quota* of shoulder-knots. That fellow, cries one, has no soul ; where is his shoulder-knot ? Our three brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. If they went to the playhouse the door-keeper showed them into the twelvepenny gallery ; if they called a boat, says a waterman, ' I am first sculler ; ' if they stepped into the Rose to take a bottle, the drawer would cry, ' Friend, we sell no ale ; ' if they went to visit a lady, a footman met them at the door with ' Pray send up your message.' In this unhappy case they went immediately to consult their father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot. What should they do ?—what temper should they find ?—obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought one of the brothers, who happened to be more book-learned than the other two, said he had found an expedient. It is true, said he, there is nothing here in this will, *totidem verbis*, making mention of shoulder-knots : but I dare conjecture we may find them *inclusive*, or *totidem syllabis*. This distinction was immediately approved by all, and so they fell again to examine ; but their evil star had so directed the matter that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writings. Upon which disappointment, he who found the former evasion took heart, and said, ' Brothers, there are yet hopes ; for though we cannot find

them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage we shall make them out *tertio modo* or *totidem literis*. This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and soon picked out S, H, Q, U, L, D, E, R ; "when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty ! but the distinguishing brother, for whom we shall hereafter find a name, now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument that K was a modern, illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor anywhere to be found in ancient manuscripts. It is true, said he, the word *Calendæ* hath in Q. V. C. been sometimes written with a K, but erroneously ; for in the best copies it has been ever spelt with a C. And, by consequence, it was a gross mistake in our language to spell knot with a K ; but that from henceforward he would take care it should be written with a C. Upon this all farther difficulty vanished—shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno*, and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best. But, as human happiness is of a very short duration, so in those days were human fashions, upon which it entirely depends. Shoulder-knots had their time, and we must now imagine them in their decline ; for a certain lord came just from Paris, with fifty yards of gold lace upon his coat, exactly trimmed after the court fashion of that month. In two days all mankind appeared closed up in bars of gold lace : whoever durst peep abroad without his complement of gold lace was as scandalous as a —, and as ill received among the women : what should our three knights do in this momentous affair ? they had sufficiently strained a

point already in the affair of shoulder-knots : upon recourse to the will, nothing appeared there but *altum silentium*. That of the shoulder-knots was a loose, flying, circumstantial point ; but this of gold lace seemed too considerable an alteration without better warrant ; it did *aliquo modo essentia adherere*, and therefore required a positive precept. But about this time it fell out that the learned brother aforesaid had read *Aristotelis dialectica*, and especially that wonderful piece *de interpretatione*, which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself ; like commentators on the Revelations, who proceed prophets without understanding a syllable of the text. Brothers, said he, you are to be informed that of wills *duo sunt genera*, nuncupatory and scriptory : that in the scriptory will here before us there is no precept or mention about gold lace, *conceditur* : but *si idem affirmetur de nuncupatorio, negatur*. For, brothers, if you remember, we heard a fellow say when we were boys that he heard my father's man say that he would advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it. By G—— ! that is very true, cries the other ; I remember it perfectly well, said the third. And so without more ado they got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.

A while after there came up all in fashion a pretty sort of flame-coloured satin for linings ; and the mercer brought a pattern of it immediately to our three gentlemen ; An please your worships, said he, my lord Conway and Sir John Walters had linings out of this very piece last night : it takes wonderfully, and I shall not have a remnant left enough to make my wife a pincushion by



to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. Upon this they fell again to rummage the will, because the present case also required a positive precept—the lining being held by orthodox writers to be of the essence of the coat. After long search they could fix upon nothing to the matter in hand, except a short advice of their father in the will to take care of fire and put out their candles before they went to sleep. This, though a good deal for the purpose, and helping very far towards self-conviction, yet not seeming wholly of force to establish a command (being resolved to avoid further scruple as well as future occasion for scandal), says he that was the scholar, I remember to have read in wills of a codicil annexed, which is indeed a part of the will, and what it contains has equal authority with the rest. Now, I have been considering of this same will here before us, and I cannot reckon it to be complete for want of such a codicil : I will therefore fasten one in its proper place very dexterously—I have had it by me some time—it was written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather's, and talks a great deal, as good luck would have it; of this very flame-coloured satin. The project was immediately approved by the other two ; an old parchment scroll was tagged on according to art in the form of a codicil annexed, and the satin bought and worn.

Next winter a player, hired for the purpose by the corporation of fringe-makers, acted his part in a new comedy, all covered with silver fringe, and, according to the laudable custom, gave rise to that fashion. Upon which the brothers, consulting their father's will, to their great astonishment found these words ; *item*, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats, etc., with a penalty,

in case of disobedience, too long here to insert. However, after some pause, the brother so often mentioned for his erudition, who was well skilled in criticisms, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless, that the same word which in the will is called fringe does also signify a broomstick : and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not, he humbly conceived, in propriety of speech be reasonably applied to a broomstick : but it was replied upon him that this epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again why their father should forbid them to wear a broomstick on their coats—a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent ; upon which he was taken up short, as one that spoke irreverently of a mystery, which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into or nicely reasoned upon. And, in short, their father's authority being now considerably sunk, this expedient was allowed to serve as a lawful dispensation for wearing their full proportion of silver fringe.

A while after was revived an old fashion, long antiquated, of embroidery with Indian figures of men, women, and children. Here they remembered but too well how their father had always abhorred this fashion ; that he made several paragraphs on purpose, importing his utter detestation of it, and bestowing his everlasting curse to his sons whenever they should wear it. For all this, in a few days they appeared higher in the fashion than anybody else in the town. But they solved the matter by saying that these figures were not at all the same with those that were formerly worn and were meant in the will.

Besides, they did not wear them in the sense as forbidden by their father ; but as they were a commendable custom, and of great use to the public. That these rigorous clauses in the will did therefore require some allowance and a favourable interpretation, and ought to be understood *cum grano salis*.

But fashions perpetually altering in that age, the scholastic brother grew weary of searching farther evasions, and solving everlasting contradictions. Resolved, therefore, at all hazards, to comply with the modes of the world, they concerted matters together, and agreed unanimously to lock up their father's will in a strong box, brought out of Greece or Italy, I have forgotten which, and trouble themselves no farther to examine it, but only refer to its authority whenever they thought fit. In consequence whereof, a while after it grew a general mode to wear an infinite number of points, most of them tagged with silver : upon which the scholar pronounced, *ex cathedrâ*, that points were absolutely *jure paterno*, as they might very well remember. It is true, indeed, the fashion prescribed somewhat more than were directly named in the will : however, that they, as heirs-general of their father, had power to make and add certain clauses for public emolument, though not deducible, *totidem verbis*, from the letter of the will, or else *multa absurda sequerentur*. This was understood for canonical, and therefore, on the following Sunday, they came to church all covered with points.

The learned brother, so often mentioned, was reckoned the best scholar in all that or the next street to it, inso-much as, having run something behindhand in the world, he obtained the favour from a certain lord to receive

him into his house, and to teach his children. A while after the lord died, and he, by long practice upon his father's will, found the way of contriving a deed of conveyance of that house to himself and his heirs ; upon which he took possession, turned the young squires out, and received his brothers in their stead.

## II

I have now, with much pains and study, conducted the reader to a period where he must expect to hear of great revolutions. For no sooner had our learned brother, so often mentioned, got a warm house of his own over his head than he began to look big and to take mightily upon him ; insomuch that, unless the gentle reader, out of his great candour, will please a little to exalt his idea, I am afraid he will henceforth hardly know the hero of the play when he happens to meet him ; his part, his dress, and his mien being so much altered.

He told his brothers he would have them to know that he was their elder, and consequently his father's sole heir ; nay, a while after, he would not allow them to call him brother, but *Mr. PETER*, and then he must be styled *Father PETER* ; and sometimes, *My Lord PETER*. To support this grandeur, which he soon began to consider could not be maintained without a better *fonde* than what he was born to, after much thought, he cast about at last to turn projector and virtuoso, wherein he so well succeeded, that many famous discoveries, projects, and machines, which bear great vogue and practice at present in the world, are owing entirely to lord *PETER*'s invention. I will deduce the best account I have been able to collect of the chief among them, without considering much the

order they came out in ; because I think authors are not well agreed as to that point.

I hope, when this treatise of mine shall be translated into foreign languages (as I may without vanity affirm that the labour of collecting, the faithfulness in recounting, and the great usefulness of the matter to the public, will amply deserve that justice), that the worthy members of the several academies abroad, especially those of France and Italy, will favourably accept these humble offers for the advancement of universal knowledge. I do also advertise the most reverent fathers, the Eastern missionaries, that I have, purely for their sakes, made use of such words and phrases as will best admit an easy turn into any of the oriental languages, especially the Chinese. And so I proceed with great content of mind, upon reflecting how much emolument this whole globe of the earth is likely to reap by my labours.

The first undertaking of lord Peter was, to purchase a large continent, lately said to have been discovered in *terra australis incognita*. This tract of land he bought at a very great pennyworth from the discoverers themselves (though some pretended to doubt whether they had ever been there), and then retailed it into several cantons to certain dealers, who carried over colonies, but were all shipwrecked in the voyage. Upon which lord Peter sold the said continent to other customers again, and again, and again, and again, with the same success.

The second project I shall mention was his sovereign remedy for the worms, especially those in the spleen. The patient was to eat nothing after supper for three nights : as soon as he went to bed he was carefully to lie on one side, and when he grew weary to turn upon the other ; he

must also duly confine his two eyes to the same object. These prescriptions diligently observed, the worms would void insensibly by perspiration, ascending through the brain.

A third invention was the erecting of a whispering-office for the public good and ease of all such as are hypochondriacal or troubled with the colic ; as likewise of all eaves-droppers, physicians, midwives, small politicians, friends fallen out, repeating poets, lovers happy or in despair, privy-counsellors, pages, parasites, and buffoons ; in short, of all such as are in danger of bursting with too much wind. An ass's head was placed so conveniently that the party affected might easily with his mouth accost either of the animal's ears ; which he was to apply close for a certain space, and by a fugitive faculty, peculiar to the ears of that animal, receive immediate benefit, either by eructation, or expiration, or evomitation.

Another very beneficial project of lord Peter's was, an office of insurance for tobacco-pipes, martyrs of the modern zeal, volumes of poetry, shadows, and rivers ; that these, nor any of these, shall receive damage by fire. Whence our friendly societies may plainly find themselves to be only transcribers from this original ; though the one and the other have been of great benefit to the undertakers, as well as of equal to the public.

LORD PETER was also held the original author of puppets and raree-shows ; the great usefulness whereof being so generally known, I shall not enlarge farther upon this particular.

But another discovery, for which he was much renowned, was his famous universal pickle. For, having remarked how your common pickle in use among housewives was of

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no farther benefit than to preserve dead flesh and certain kinds of vegetables, Peter, with great cost as well as art, had contrived a pickle proper for houses, gardens, towns, men, women, children, and cattle ; wherein he could preserve them as sound as insects in amber. Now, this pickle, to the taste, the smell, and the sight, appeared exactly the same with what is in common service for beef, and butter, and herrings, and has been often that way applied with great success ; but, for its many sovereign virtues, was a quite different thing. For Peter would put in a certain quantity of his powder pimperlomp, after which it never failed of success. The operation was performed by spargefaction, in a proper time of the moon. The patient who was to be pickled, if it were a house, would infallibly be preserved from all spiders, rats, and weasels ; if the party affected were a dog, he should be exempt from mange, and madness, and hunger. It also infallibly took away all scabs, and lice, and scalled heads from children, never hindering the patient from any duty, either at bed or board.

But of all Peter's rarities he most valued a certain set of bulls, whose race was by great fortune preserved in a lineal descent from those that guarded the golden fleece. Though some, who pretended to observe them curiously, doubted the breed had not been kept entirely chaste, because they had degenerated from their ancestors in some qualities, and had acquired others very extraordinary, by a foreign mixture. The bulls of Colchis are recorded to have brazen feet ; but whether it happened by ill pasture and running, by an alloy from intervention of other parents, from stolen intrigues ; whatever was the cause, it is certain that lord Peter's bulls were extremely



vitiated by the rust of time in the metal of their feet, which was now sunk into common lead. However, the terrible roaring peculiar to their lineage was preserved ; as likewise that faculty of breathing out fire from their nostrils, which, notwithstanding, many of their detractors took to be a feat of art, and to be nothing so terrible as it appeared, proceeding only from their usual course of diet, which was of squibs and crackers. However, they had two peculiar marks, which extremely distinguished them from the bulls of Jason, and which I have not met together in the description of any other monster beside that in Horace :

‘ Varias inducere plumas ; ’

and

Atrum desinat in piscem.’

For these had fishes’ tails, yet upon occasion could outfly any bird in the air. Peter put these bulls upon several employs. Sometimes he would set them a-roaring to fright naughty boys, and make them quiet. Sometimes he would send them out upon errands of great importance; where, it is wonderful to recount (and perhaps the cautious reader may think much to believe it), an *appetitus sensibilis* deriving itself through the whole family from their noble ancestors, guardians of the golden fleece, they continued so extremely fond of gold, that if Peter sent them abroad, though it were only upon a compliment, they would roar, and spit, and belch, and snivel out fire, and keep a perpetual coil, till you flung them a bit of gold ; but then, *pulveris exigui jactu*, they would grow calm and quiet as lambs. In short, whether by secret connivance or encouragement from their master, or out of their own foolish affection to gold, or both, it is certain they were

no better than a sort of sturdy, swaggering beggars ; and where they could not prevail to get an alms, would make children fall into fits, who to this very day usually call sprights and hobgoblins by the name of bull-beggars. They grew at last so very troublesome to the neighbourhood, that some gentlemen of the north-west got a parcel of right English bull-dogs, and baited them so terribly that they felt it ever after.

I must needs mention one more of lord Peter's projects, which was very extraordinary, and discovered him to be master of a high reach and profound invention. Whenever it happened that any rogue of Newgate was condemned to be hanged, Peter would offer him a pardon for a certain sum of money ; which, when the poor caitiff had made all shifts to scrape up and send, his lordship would return a piece of paper in this form :

' To all mayors, sheriffs, jailors, constables, bailiffs, hangmen, etc. Whereas we are informed that A. B. remains in the hands of you, or some of you, under the sentence of death. We will and command you, upon sight hereof, to let the said prisoner depart to his own habitation, whether he stands condemned for murder, sacrilege, treason, blasphemy, etc., for which this shall be your sufficient warrant ; and if you fail hereof, G— condemn you and yours to all eternity. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Your most humble

Man's man,

Emperor PETER.'

The wretches, trusting to this, lost their lives and money too.

I desire of those whom the learned among posterity will appoint for commentators upon this elaborate treatise, that they will proceed with great caution upon certain dark points, wherein all who are not *verè adepts* may be in danger to form rash and hasty conclusions, especially in some mysterious paragraphs, where certain *arcana* are joined for brevity sake, which in the operation must be divided. And I am certain that future sons of art will return large thanks to my memory for so grateful, so useful an *innuendo*.

It will be no difficult part to persuade the reader that so many worthy discoveries met with great success in the world; though I may justly assure him that I have related much the smallest number; my design having been only to single out such as will be of most benefit for public imitation, or which best served to give some idea of the reach and wit of the inventor. And therefore it need not be wondered at if by this time lord Peter was become exceeding rich: but, alas! he had kept his brain so long and so violently upon the rack, that at last it shook itself, and began to turn round for a little ease. In short, what with pride, projects, and knavery, poor Peter was grown distracted, and conceived the strangest imaginations in the world. In the height of his fits, as it is usual with those who run mad out of pride, he would call himself God Almighty, and sometimes monarch of the universe. I have seen him (says my author) take three old high-crowned hats, and clap them all on his head three storey high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling rod in his hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter with much grace, like a well-educated

spaniel, would present them with his foot, and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chaps, and give them a kick on the mouth, which has ever since been called a salute. Whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt. Meantime his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time ; where his first *boutade* was to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too. A while after he nailed up the cellar door, and would not allow his brothers a drop of drink to their victuals. Dining one day at an alderman's in the city, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren, in the praises of his sirloin of beef. ' Beef,' said the sage magistrate, ' is the king of meat ; beef comprehends in it the quintessence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard.' When Peter came home he would needs take the fancy of cooking up this doctrine into use, and apply the precept, in default of a sirloin, to his brown loaf. ' Bread,' says he, ' dear brothers, is the staff of life ; in which bread is contained, inclusive, the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plum-pudding, and custard ; and, to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm, through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread.' Upon the strength of these conclusions, next day at dinner was the brown loaf served up in all the formality of a city feast. ' Come, brothers,' said Peter, ' fall to, and spare not ; here is excellent good mutton ; or hold, now my hand is in, I

will help you.' At which word, in much ceremony, with fork and knife, he carves out two good slices of a loaf, and presents each on a plate to his brothers. The elder of the two, not suddenly entering into lord Peter's conceit, began with very civil language to examine the mystery. 'My lord,' said he, 'I doubt, with great submission, there may be some mistake.'—'What,' says Peter, 'you are pleasant; come then, let us hear this jest your head is so big with.'—'None in the world, my lord; but, unless I am very much deceived, your lordship was pleased a while ago to let fall a word about mutton, and I would be glad to see it with all my heart.'—'How,' said Peter, appearing in great surprise, 'I do not comprehend this at all.' Upon which the younger interposing to set the business aright, 'My lord,' said he, 'my brother, I suppose, is hungry, and longs for the mutton your lordship has promised us to dinner.'—'Pray,' said Peter, 'take me along with you; either you are both mad, or disposed to be merrier than I approve of; if you there do not like your piece I will carve you another; though I should take that to be the choice bit of the whole shoulder.'—'What then, my lord,' replied the first, 'it seems this is a shoulder of mutton all this while?'—'Pray, sir,' says Peter, 'eat your victuals, and leave off your impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present: ' but the other could not forbear, being over-provoked at the affected seriousness of Peter's countenance: 'My lord,' said he, 'I can only say, that to my eyes, and fingers, and teeth, and nose, it seems to be nothing but a crust of bread.' Upon which the second put in his word: 'I never saw a piece of mutton in my life so nearly resembling a slice from a twelvepenny loaf.'—'Look ye,

gentlemen,' cries Peter, in a rage ; ' to convince you what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant, wilful puppies you are, I will use but this plain argument : it is true, good, natural mutton as any in Leadenhall market.' Such a thundering proof as this left no farther room for objection; the two unbelievers began to gather and pocket up their mistake as hastily as they could. ' Why, truly,' said the first, ' upon more mature consideration——'—' Ay,' says the other, interrupting him, ' now I have thought better on the thing, your lordship seems to have a great deal of reason.'—' Very well,' said Peter ; ' here, boy, fill me a beer-glass of claret ; here's to you both with all my heart.' The two brethren, much delighted to see him so readily appeased, returned their most humble thanks, and said they would be glad to pledge his lordship. ' That you shall,' said Peter ; ' I am not a person to refuse you anything that is reasonable : wine, moderately taken, is a cordial ; here is a glass a-piece for you ; it is true natural juice from the grape, none of your vintner's brewings.' Having spoke thus, he presented to each of them another large dry crust, bidding them drink it off, and not be bashful, for it would do them no hurt. The two brothers, after having performed the usual office in such delicate conjunctures, of staring a sufficient period at lord Peter and each other, and finding how matters were likely to go, resolved not to enter on a new dispute, but let him carry the point as he pleased ; for he was now got into one of his mad fits, and to argue or expostulate farther would only serve to render him a hundred times more untractable.

I have chosen to relate this worthy matter in all its circumstances, because it gave a principal occasion to that

great and famous rupture which happened about the same time among these brethren, and was never afterwards made up. But of that I shall treat at large in another section.

However, it is certain that lord Peter, even in his lucid intervals, was very lewdly given in his common conversation, extremely wilful and positive, and would at any time rather argue to the death than allow himself once to be in an error. Besides, he had an abominable faculty of telling huge palpable lies upon all occasions ; and not only swearing to the truth, but cursing the whole company if they pretended to make the least scruple of believing him. One time he swore he had a cow at home which gave as much milk at a meal as would fill three thousand churches ; and, what was yet more extraordinary, would never turn sour. Another time he was telling of an old sign-post, that belonged to his father, with nails and timber enough in it to build sixteen large men of war. Talking one day of Chinese waggons, which were made so light as to sail over mountains, ‘Z—ds,’ said Peter, ‘where’s the wonder of that ? I saw a large house of lime and stone travel over sea and land (granting that it stopped sometimes to bait) above two thousand German leagues.’ And that which was the good of it, he would swear desperately all the while that he never told a lie in his life ; and at every word, ‘Gentlemen, I tell you nothing but the truth.’

In short, Peter grew so scandalous, that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say he was no better than a knave. And his two brothers, long weary of his ill-usage, resolved at last to leave him ; but first they humbly desired a copy of their father’s will, which had

now lain by neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request he called them rogues, traitors, and the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the youngsters watched their opportunity, made a shift to come at the will, and took a *copia vera* by which they presently saw how grossly they had been abused ; their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded that whatever they got should lie in common among them all. Pursuant to which their next enterprise was to break open the cellar door, and get a little good drink, to spirit and comfort their hearts. While all this was in agitation there enters a solicitor from Newgate, desiring lord Peter would please procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him he was a coxcomb to seek pardons from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client ; and discovered all the method of that imposture in the same form I delivered it a while ago, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king. In the midst of all this clutter and revolution, in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels, and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses, not very important here to repeat, by main force very fairly kicked them both out of doors, and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this.



## THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

(1704)

THE *Battle of the Books* was published with *A Tale of a Tub* in one volume. There are grounds for supposing that it was the earliest of Swift's satires. In this book, Swift's genius finds its true milieu; he left behind the literary lapses of the artificial Pindaric Odes, and concentrated hereafter on prose satire. The background of *The Battle of the Books* is the controversy regarding the relative merits of ancient and of modern learning. This controversy had been going on in England since the days of Bacon's *Novum Organum* where that writer dared to challenge the suggestion that the earth was decaying, and to promulgate a new method of science in which observation and experiment were to take the place of the old appeal to ancient authority. On the scientific side the struggle had been maintained by Hakewill in his *Apology* (1627) and by Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667). Sprat sets out to justify the Royal Society against the attacks of those who still maintained the superiority of the ancients. In France, the discussion, which in the early stages was concerned with the philosophic and scientific aspect under the aegis of Descartes and Fontenelle, had now veered to the side of literature in the hands of Perrault and Boileau. In England, the most important figure in the literary struggle had been Dryden, but his astounding inconsistency makes it difficult to identify him with either side in the dispute. Sir William Temple, Swift's patron, entered the lists in 1690 on the side of the ancients. In his treatise he had assumed the genuineness of the Letters of Phalaris. The spuriousness of these was demonstrated by Bentley, the famous classical scholar, and by William Wotton. Temple and his champions were no match for Bentley, and Swift, probably detecting this, rushed into the controversy with *The Battle of the Books*. He took the side of his patron and lashed his opponents with sarcastic humour and irony. The fact that he was championing a lost cause adds relish to the satire. He performed exactly what he set out to perform, and Bentley's erudition was powerless against the mirth-provoking satire of Swift.

This quarrel first began, as I have heard it affirmed by an old dweller in the neighbourhood, about a small spot of ground, lying and being upon one of the two tops of the

hill Parnassus; the highest and largest of which had, it seems, been time out of mind in quiet possession of certain tenants, called the Ancients; and the other was held by the Moderns. But these, disliking their present station, sent certain ambassadors to the ancients, complaining of a great nuisance; how the height of that part of Parnassus quite spoiled the prospect of theirs, especially toward the *east*; and therefore, to avoid a war, offered them the choice of this alternative, either that the ancients would please to remove themselves and their effects down to the lower summit, which the moderns would graciously surrender to them, and advance into their place; or else the said ancients will give leave to the moderns to come with shovels and mattocks, and level the said hill as low as they shall think it convenient. To which the ancients made answer, how little they expected such a message as this from a colony whom they had admitted, out of their own free grace, to so near a neighbourhood. That, as to their own seat, they were aborigines of it, and therefore to talk with them of a removal or surrender was a language they did not understand. That if the height of the hill on their side shortened the prospect of the moderns, it was a disadvantage they could not help; but desired them to consider whether that injury (if it be any) were not largely recompensed by the shade and shelter it afforded them. That as to the levelling or digging down, it was either folly or ignorance to propose it if they did or did not know how that side of the hill was an entire rock, which would break their tools and hearts, without any damage to itself. That they would therefore advise the moderns rather to raise their own side of the hill than dream of pulling down

that of the ancients ; to the former of which they would not only give licence, but also largely contribute. All this was rejected by the moderns with much indignation, who still insisted upon one of the two expedients ; and so this difference broke out into a long and obstinate war, maintained on the one part by resolution, and by the courage of certain leaders and allies ; but, on the other, by the greatness of their number, upon all defeats affording continual recruits. In this quarrel whole rivulets of ink have been exhausted, and the virulence of both parties enormously augmented. Now, it must here be understood that ink is the great missive weapon in all battles of the learned, which, conveyed through a sort of engine called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy by the valiant on each side, with equal skill and violence, as if it were an engagement of *porcupines*. This malignant liquor was compounded, by the engineer who invented it, of two ingredients, which are, gall and copperas ; by its bitterness and venom to suit, in some degree, as well as to foment, the genius of the combatants. And as the Grecians, after an engagement, when they could not agree about the victory, were wont to set up trophies on both sides, the beaten party being content to be at the same expense, to keep itself in countenance (a laudable and ancient custom, happily revived of late in the art of war), so the learned, after a sharp and bloody dispute, do, on both sides, hang out their trophies too, whichever comes by the worst. These trophies have largely inscribed on them the merits of the cause ; a full impartial account of such a *battle*, and how the victory fell clearly to the party that set them up. They are known to the world under several names ; as disputes,

arguments, rejoinders, brief considerations, answers, replies, remarks, reflections, objections, confutations. For a very few days they are fixed up in all public places, either by themselves or their representatives, for passengers to gaze at ; whence the chiefest and largest are removed to certain magazines they call libraries, there to remain in a quarter purposely assigned them, and thenceforth begin to be called books of controversy.

In these books is wonderfully instilled and preserved the spirit of each warrior while he is alive ; and after his death his soul transmigrates thither to inform them. This at least is the more common opinion ; but I believe it is with libraries as with other cemeteries ; where some philosophers affirm that a certain spirit, which they call *brutum hominis*, hovers over the monument, till the body is corrupted and turns to dust or to worms, but then vanishes or dissolves ; so, we may say, a restless spirit haunts over every book, till dust or worms have seized upon it ; which to some may happen in a few days, but to others later : and therefore books of controversy, being, of all others, haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest ; and for fear of a mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains. Of which invention the original occasion was this : When the works of Scotus first came out, they were carried to a certain great library, and had lodgings appointed them ; but this author was no sooner settled than he went to visit his master, Aristotle ; and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force, and turn him out from his ancient station among the divines, where he had peaceably

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dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead ; but, to maintain quiet for the future, it was decreed that all *polemics* of the larger size should be held fast with a chain.

By this expedient the public peace of libraries might certainly have been preserved if a new species of controversial books had not arisen of late years, instinct with a most malignant spirit, from the war above mentioned between the learned about the higher summit of *Par-nassus*.

When these books were first admitted into the public libraries, I remember to have said, upon occasion, to several persons concerned, how I was sure they would create broils wherever they came, unless a world of care were taken : and therefore I advised that the champions of each side should be coupled together, or otherwise mixed, that, like the blending of contrary poisons, their malignity might be employed among themselves. And it seems I was neither an ill prophet nor an ill counsellor ; for it was nothing else but the neglect of this caution which gave occasion to the terrible fight that happened on Friday last between the ancient and modern books in the king's library. Now, because the talk of this battle is so fresh in everybody's mouth, and the expectation of the town so great to be informed in the particulars, I, being possessed of all qualifications requisite in an historian, and retained by neither party, have resolved to comply with the urgent importunity of my friends, by writing down a full impartial account thereof.

The guardian of the regal library, a person of great valour, but chiefly renowned for his humanity, had been a

fierce champion for the moderns ; and, in an engagement upon Parnassus, had vowed, with his own hands to knock down two of the ancient chiefs, who guarded a small pass on the superior rock ; but, endeavouring to climb up, was cruelly obstructed by his own unhappy weight and tendency towards his centre ; a quality to which those of the modern party are extremely subject ; for, being light-headed, they have, in speculation, a wonderful agility, and conceive nothing too high for them to mount ; but, in reducing to practice, discover a mighty pressure about their posteriors and their heels. Having thus failed in his design, the disappointed champion bore a cruel rancour to the ancients ; which he resolved to gratify by showing all marks of his favour to the books of their adversaries, and lodging them in the fairest apartments ; when, at the same time, whatever book had the boldness to own itself for an advocate of the ancients was buried alive in some obscure corner, and threatened, upon the least displeasure, to be turned out of doors. Besides, it so happened that about this time there was a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library ; for which several reasons were assigned. Some imputed it to a great heap of learned dust, which a perverse wind blew off from a shelf of moderns into the keeper's eyes. Others affirmed he had a humour to pick the worms out of the schoolmen, and swallow them fresh and fasting : whereof some fell upon his spleen, and some climbed up into his head, to the great perturbation of both. And lastly, others maintained that, by walking much in the dark about the library, he had quite lost the situation of it out of his head ; and therefore, in replacing his books, he was apt to mistake, and clap *Des Cartes* next to *Aristotle* ; poor

Plato had got between Hobbes and the Seven Wise Masters, and Virgil was hemmed in with Dryden on one side and Withers on the other.

Meanwhile those books that were advocates for the moderns chose out one from among them to make a progress through the whole library, examine the number and strength of their party, and concert their affairs. This messenger performed all things very industriously, and brought back with him a list of their forces, in all, fifty thousand, consisting chiefly of light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries ; whereof the foot were in general but sorrily armed and worse clad ; their horses large, but extremely out of case and heart ; however, some few, by trading among the ancients, had furnished themselves tolerably enough.

While things were in this ferment, discord grew extremely high ; hot words passed on both sides, and ill blood was plentifully bred. Here a solitary ancient, squeezed up among a whole shelf of moderns, offered fairly to dispute the case, and to prove by manifest reason that the priority was due to them from long possession, and in regard of their prudence, antiquity, and, above all, their great merits toward the moderns. But these denied the premises, and seemed very much to wonder how the ancients could pretend to insist upon their antiquity, when it was so plain (if they went to that) that the moderns were much the more ancient of the two. As for any obligations they owed to the ancients, they renounced them all. It is true, said they, we are informed some few of our party have been so mean to borrow their subsistence from you ; but the rest, infinitely the greater number (and especially we French and English), were so far from

stooping to so base an example, that there never passed, till this very hour, six words between us. For our horses were of our own breeding, our arms of our own forging, and our clothes of our own cutting out and sewing. Plato was by chance up on the next shelf, and observing those that spoke to be in the ragged plight mentioned a while ago ; their jades lean and foundered, their weapons of rotten wood, their armour rusty, and nothing but rags underneath ; he laughed loud, and in his pleasant way swore he believed them.

Now, the moderns had not proceeded in their late negotiation with secrecy enough to escape the notice of the enemy. For those advocates who had begun the quarrel, by setting first on foot the dispute of precedency, talked so loud of coming to a battle, that Sir William Temple happened to overhear them, and gave immediate intelligence to the ancients : who thereupon drew up their scattered troops together, resolving to act upon the defensive ; upon which, several of the moderns fled over to their party, and among the rest Temple himself. This Temple, having been educated and long conversed among the ancients, was, of all the moderns, their greatest favourite, and became their greatest champion.

Things were at this crisis when a material accident fell out. For upon the highest corner of a large window there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts you came to the centre, wherein you



might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out upon all occasions of prey and defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace by brooms from below ; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went ; where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel ; which, yielding to the unequal weight, sunk down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution ; or else, that Beelzebub, with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many thousands of his subjects whom his enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length valiantly resolved to issue forth and meet his fate. Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings, and disengaging them from the ragged remnants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured out, when, beholding the chasms, the ruins, and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wits' end ; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events (for they knew each other by sight) : A plague split you, said he ; is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here ? could not you look before you ? do you think I have nothing else to do

(in the devil's name) but to mend and repair?—Good words, friend, said the bee (having now pruned himself, and being disposed to droll): I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born.—Sirrah, replied the spider, if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family, never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners.—I pray have patience, said the bee, or you'll spend your substance, and, for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all, toward the repair of your house.—Rogue, rogue, replied the spider, yet methinks you should have more respect to a person whom all the world allows to be so much your betters.—By my troth, said the bee, the comparison will amount to a very good jest; and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute. At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy, with resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry to urge on his own reasons, without the least regard to the answers or objections of his opposite; and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

Not to disparage myself, said he, by the comparison with such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is a universal plunder upon nature; a freebooter over fields and gardens; and, for the sake of stealing will rob a nettle as easily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within

myself. This large castle (to show my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person.

I am glad, answered the bee, to hear you grant at least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice ; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music ; and Providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts, without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit indeed all the flowers and blossoms of the field and garden ; but whatever I collect thence enriches myself, without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture and other mathematics, I have little to say : in that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough ; but, by woeful experience for us both, it is too plain the materials are naught ; and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter, as well as method and art. You boast indeed of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself ; that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast ; and, though I would by no means lessen or disparage your genuine stock of either, yet I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions, by sweepings exhaled from below ; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this ; whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride,

feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all but flybane and a cobweb ; or that which, by a universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax.

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books, in arms below, stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue ; which was not long undetermined ; for the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses, without looking for a reply, and left the spider, like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

Day being far spent, and the numerous forces of the moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot a captain whose name was Bentley, the most deformed of all the moderns ; tall, but without shape or comeliness ; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces ; and the sound of it, as he marched, was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead, which an Etesian wind blows suddenly down from the roof of some steeple. His helmet was of old rusty iron, but the vizor was brass, which, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain ; so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality, of most malignant nature, was seen to distil from his lips. In his right hand he grasped a flail, and (that he might never be unprovided of an offensive weapon) a vessel full of ordure in his left. Thus completely armed, he

advanced with a slow and heavy pace where the modern chiefs were holding a consult upon the sum of things ; who, as he came onwards, laughed to behold his crooked leg and humped shoulder, which his boot and armour, vainly endeavouring to hide, were forced to comply with and expose. The generals made use of him for his talent of railing ; which, kept within government, proved frequently of great service to their cause, but, at other times, did more mischief than good ; for, at the least touch of offence, and often without any at all, he would, like a wounded elephant, convert it against his leaders. Such, at this juncture, was the disposition of Bentley ; grieved to see the enemy prevail, and dissatisfied with everybody's conduct but his own. He humbly gave the modern generals to understand that he conceived, with great submission, they were all a pack of rogues, and fools, and cowards, and confounded loggerheads, and illiterate whelps, and nonsensical scoundrels ; that, if himself had been constituted general, those presumptuous dogs, the ancients, would long before this have been beaten out of the field. You, said he, sit here idle ; but when I, or any other valiant modern, kill an enemy, you are sure to seize the spoil. But I will not march one foot against the foe till you all swear to me that whomever I take or kill, his arms I shall quietly possess. Bentley having spoken thus, Scaliger, bestowing him a sour look, Miscreant prater ! said he, eloquent only in thine own eyes, thou raillest without wit, or truth, or discretion. The malignity of thy temper perverteth nature ; thy learning makes thee more barbarous ; thy study of humanity more inhuman ; thy converse among poets more grovelling, miry, and dull. All arts of civilising others render thee rude and

untractable ; courts have taught thee ill manners, and polite conversation has finished thee a pedant. Besides, a greater coward burdeneth not the army. But never despond ; I pass my word, whatever spoil thou takest shall certainly be thy own ; though I hope that vile carcase will first become a prey to kites and worms.

Bentley durst not reply ; but, half choked with spleen and rage, withdrew, in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton ; resolving by policy or surprise to attempt some neglected quarter of the ancients' army. They began their march over carcases of their slaughtered friends ; then to the right of their own forces ; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus's tomb, which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, toward the enemy's outguards ; looking about, if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed and remote from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they, with tails depressed and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow ; meanwhile the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays ; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection or in sphere direct ; but one surveys the region round, while the other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcase half devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection, when at

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a distance they might perceive two shining suits of armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing of this adventure fell to Bentley ; on he went, and in his van Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the ancients' army, Phalaris and Æsop, lay fast asleep ; Bentley would fain have despatched them both, and, stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris's breast. But then the goddess Affright, interposing, caught the modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw ; both the dormant heroes happened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping, and busy in a dream. For Phalaris was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull. And Æsop dreamed that, as he and the ancient chiefs were lying on the ground, a wild ass broke loose, ran about, trampling and kicking and dunging in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours, and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He, in the meantime, had wandered long in search of some enterprise, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued from a fountain hard by, called, in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and, parched with thirst, resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but, ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came, and in the channel held his shield betwixt the modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For,

although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud ; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to draw too deep or far from the spring.

At the fountain-head Wotton discerned two heroes ; the one he could not distinguish, but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton, observing him, with quaking knees and trembling hands, spoke thus to himself : O that I could kill this destroyer of our army, what renown should I purchase among the chiefs ! but to issue out against him, man against man, shield against shield, and lance against lance, what modern of us dare ? for he fights like a god, and Pallas or Apollo are ever at his elbow. But, O mother ! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son of so great a goddess, grant me to hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with the spoils. The first part of this prayer the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus ; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate, was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and, brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might ; the goddess, his mother, at the same time adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went hissing, and reached even to the belt of the averted ancient, upon which lightly grazing, it fell to the ground. Temple neither felt the weapon touch him nor



heard it fall : and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance against so great a leader unrevenged ; but Apollo, enraged that a javelin flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess should pollute his fountain, put on the shape of —, and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple : he pointed first to the lance, then to the distant modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge. Boyle, clad in a suit of armour which had been given him by all the gods, immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains, or Araby desert, sent by his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along, wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains, or a furious boar ; if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet, much provoked at the offensive noise, which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder, and with more delight than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy armed and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover Bentley appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping ancients. Boyle observed him well, and soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilt, rage sparkled in his eyes, and, leaving his pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenged on both ; but both now fled different ways : and, as a woman in a little

house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning, if chance her geese be scattered o'er the common, she courses round the plain from side to side, compelling here and there the stragglers to the flock ; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the champaign ; so Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends : finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined, and drew themselves in phalanx. First Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast ; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point, and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took up a lance of wondrous length and sharpness ; and, as this pair of friends compacted, stood close side to side, he wheeled him to the right, and, with unusual force, darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and flanking down his arms close to his ribs, hoping to save his body, in went the point, passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate. As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to their ribs ; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths ; so closely joined that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved, loving pair ; few equals have you left behind : and happy and immortal shall you be, if all my wit and eloquence can make you.

And now . . .

*Desunt cætera.*

## THE BICKERSTAFF PAMPHLETS

(1708)

THESE pamphlets represent Swift in a lighter vein. They are the diversions of a serious mind, and help us to get a truer orientation of the author's character. They were written to poke fun at the quack astrologers of the day—the Philomaths as they delighted to call themselves—of whom perhaps the best-known was one John Partridge, a cobbler by trade. In imitation of the almanacks that these people issued for the benefit of the over-credulous, Swift composed under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff *Predictions for the Year 1708*. He assumes a very serious tone, and with great solemnity predicts the death of Partridge on 'the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever.' On the 30th of March he followed this up by 'a letter to a person of honour' describing how Partridge had died as predicted, though actually Bickerstaff was four hours wrong in his prediction. The town took up the fun with spirit; Partridge was drawn and in his almanack of 1709 solemnly asserted that he was alive, and that Bickerstaff was no more than a fraud. Swift retaliated with a *Vindication*, arguing with great skill that Partridge's protest that he was still alive, must be untrue for several excellent reasons.

### PREDICTIONS FOR THE YEAR 1708

I have considered the gross abuse of astrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myself, I could not possibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon those gross impostors, who set up to be the artists. I know several learned men have contended, that the whole is a cheat; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine the stars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts or inclinations; and whoever has not bent his studies that way may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated, by a few mean, illiterate traders between us and the stars;

who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lies, folly and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they descend from no greater a height than their own brains.

I intend, in a short time, to publish a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore shall say no more in its justification at present, than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the rest by Socrates himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspired mortals: to which if we add, that those who have condemned this art, though otherwise learned, having been such as either did not apply their studies this way, or at least did not succeed in their applications: their testimony will not be of much weight to its disadvantage, since they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or think it an injury to the art, when I see the common dealers in it, the *Students in Astrology*, the *Philomaths*, and the rest of that tribe, treated by wise men with the utmost scorn and contempt; but rather wonder, when I observe gentlemen in the country, rich enough to serve the nation in Parliament, poring in Partridge's Almanack, to find out the events of the year, at home and abroad; not daring to propose a hunting match, till Gadbury or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only astrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce an hundred instances in all their Almanacks, to convince any reasonable man, that they do not so much as understand common grammar and syntax; that they are not able to spell any word out of the usual road, nor even in their prefaces to write common

sense or intelligible English. Then, for their observations and predictions, they are such as will equally suit any age or country in the world. 'This month a certain great person will be threatened with death or sickness.' This the newspaper will tell them, for there we find at the end of the year, that no month passes without the death of some person of note ; and it would be hard, if it should be otherwise, when there are at least two thousand persons of note in this kingdom, many of them old, and the Almanack-maker has the liberty of choosing the sickliest season of the year, where he may fix his prediction. Again, 'This month an eminent clergyman will be preferred ;' of which there may be many hundreds, half of them with one foot in the grave. Then, 'Such a planet in such a house shows great machinations, plots and conspiracies, that may in time be brought to light : ' after which, if we hear of any discovery, the astrologer gets the honour ; if not, his prediction still stands good. And at last, 'God preserve King William from all his open and secret enemies, Amen.' When, if the king should happen to have died, the astrologer plainly foretold it ; otherwise it passes but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal subject : though it unluckily happened in some of their Almanacks, that poor King William was prayed for many months after he was dead, because it fell out that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions, what have we to do with their advertisements about pills and drinks, or their mutual quarrels in verse and prose of Whig and Tory, wherewith the stars have little to do ?

Having long observed and lamented these, and an hundred other abuses of this art too tedious to repeat, I

resolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general satisfaction of the kingdom : I can this year produce but a specimen of what I design for the future ; having employed most part of my time, in adjusting and correcting the calculations I made for some years past, because I would offer nothing to the world, of which I am not as fully satisfied, as that I am now alive. For these two last years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and those of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miscarriage at Toulon, with all its particulars ; and the loss of Admiral Shovel, although I was mistaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty-six hours sooner than it happened ; but upon reviewing my schemes, I quickly found the cause of that error. I likewise foretold the battle of Almanza to the very day and hour, with the loss on both sides, and the consequences thereof. All which I showed to some friends many months before they happened ; that is, I gave them papers sealed up, to open at such a time, after which they were at liberty to read them ; and there they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forebore to publish them, till I had perused the several Almanacks for the year we are now entered on. I found them all in the usual strain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine : and here I make bold to tell the world, that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of these predictions ; and I will be content, that Partridge, and the rest of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impostor, if I fail in any single particular of moment. I believe, any man who reads this

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paper, will look upon me to be at least a person of as much honesty and understanding as a common maker of Almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark ; I am not wholly unknown in the world ; I have set my name at length to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they shall find I deceive them.

In one thing I must desire to be forgiven, that I talk more sparingly of home affairs ; as it would be imprudence to discover secrets of state, so it might be dangerous to my person ; but in smaller matters, and such as are not of public consequence, I shall be very free ; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from these as the other. As for the most signal events abroad in France, Flanders, Italy and Spain, I shall make no scruple to predict them in plain terms : some of them are of importance, and I hope I shall seldom mistake the day they will happen ; therefore I think good to inform the reader, that I all along make use of the Old Style observed in England, which I desire he will compare with that of the newspapers, at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I must add one word more : I know it hath been the opinion of several learned persons, who think well enough of the true art of astrology, that the stars do only incline, and not force, the actions or wills of men ; and therefore, however I may proceed by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence so confidently assure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely considered this objection, which in some cases is of no little weight. For example : a man may, by the influence of an over-ruling planet, be disposed or inclined to rage or avarice, and yet by the

force of reason overcome that evil influence ; and this was the case of Socrates : but the great events of the world, usually depending upon numbers of men, it cannot be expected they should all unite to cross their inclinations, for pursuing a general design wherein they unanimously agree. Besides, the influence of the stars reacheth to many actions and events, which are not any way in the power of reason ; as sickness, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more needless to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the sun enters into Aries. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I pursue them to the time that he enters Libra, or somewhat more, which is the busy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjusted, upon account of several impediments needless here to mention ; besides, I must remind the reader again, that this is but a specimen of what I design in succeeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it to show how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns : it relates to Partridge the Almanack-maker ; I have consulted the star of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever ; therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time.

*The Accomplishment of the first of Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions, being An Account of the death of Mr. Partridge,*



*the Almanack-maker, upon the 29th instant, in a Letter to a Person of Honour.*

MY LORD,

In obedience to your Lordship's commands, as well as to satisfy my own curiosity, I have some days past enquired constantly after Partridge the Almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions, published about a month ago, that he should die the 29th instant, about eleven at night, of a raging fever. I had some sort of knowledge of him, when I was employed in the revenue, because he used every year to present me with his almanack, as he did other gentlemen, upon the score of some little gratuity we gave him. I saw him accidentally once or twice, about ten days before he died, and observed he began very much to droop and languish, though, I hear, his friends did not seem to apprehend him in any danger. About two or three days ago he grew ill, was confined first to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed ; where Dr. Case and Mrs. Kirleus were sent for to visit and to prescribe to him. Upon this intelligence I sent thrice every day one servant or other to enquire after his health ; and yesterday about four in the afternoon, word was brought me, that he was past hopes. Upon which I prevailed with myself to go and see him, partly out of commiseration, and, I confess, partly out of curiosity. He knew me very well, seemed surprised at my condescension, and made me compliments upon it, as well as he could in the condition he was. The people about him said he had been for some time delirious ; but when I saw him he had his understanding as well as ever I knew, and spoke strong and hearty, without any seeming uneasiness or constraint. After I had told him

I was sorry to see him in those melancholy circumstances, and said some other civilities suitable to the occasion, I desired him to tell me freely and ingenuously, whether the predictions Mr. Bickerstaff had published relating to his death had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confessed he had often had it in his head, but never with much apprehension, till about a fortnight before ; since which time it had the perpetual possession of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cause of his present distemper : for, said he, ‘ I am thoroughly persuaded, and I think I have very good reasons, that Mr. Bickerstaff spoke altogether by guess, and knew no more what will happen this year than I did myself.’ I told him his discourse surprised me : and I would be glad he were in a state of health to be able to tell me what reason he had to be convinced of Mr. Bickerstaff’s ignorance. He replied, ‘ I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know, that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest reason : because the wise and the learned, who can only judge whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it ; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows who can hardly write or read.’ I then asked him, why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with Bickerstaff’s prediction ? At which he shook his head, and said, ‘ Oh ! sir, this is no time for jesting, but for repenting those fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart.’

‘ By what I can gather from you,’ said I, ‘ the observa-

tions and predictions you printed with your almanacks, were mere impositions on the people.'

He replied, ' If it were otherwise, I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all those things : as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack, as he thinks fit : the rest was my own invention, to make my almanack sell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread ; for mending old shoes is a poor livelihood ; and,' added he, sighing, ' I wish I may not have done more mischief by my physic than my astrology ; though I had some good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compositions were such, as I thought could at least do no hurt.'

I had some other discourse with him, which I now cannot call to mind ; and I fear have already tired your lordship. I shall only add one circumstance, that on his deathbed he declared himself a nonconformist, and had a fanatic preacher to be his spiritual guide. After half an hour's conversation I took my leave, being almost stifled with the closeness of the room. I imagined he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffee-house hard by, leaving a servant at the house with orders to come immediately and tell me, as near as he could, the minute when Partridge should expire, which was not above two hours after ; when looking upon my watch, I found it to be about five minutes after seven : by which it is clear that Mr. Bickerstaff was mistaken almost four hours in his calculation. In the other circumstances he was exact enough. But whether he hath not been the cause of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reasonably disputed.

However, it must be confessed, the matter is odd enough, whether we should endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination : for my own part, though I believe no man hath less faith in these matters, yet I shall wait with some impatience, and not without some expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. Bickerstaff's second prediction, that the Cardinal de Noailles is to die upon the fourth of April ; and if that should be verified as exactly as this of poor Partridge, I must own I should be wholly surprised, and at a loss, and infallibly expect the accomplishment of all the rest.

#### A VINDICATION OF ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, ESQ.

With my utmost endeavours I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's prophecies : the first was, of a Frenchman, who was pleased to publish to the world, ' that the Cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of Monsieur Biquerstaffe : ' but how far a Frenchman, a Papist, and an enemy, is to be believed in his own case, against an English Protestant, who is true to the government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relates to an article in my predictions, which foretold the death of Mr. Partridge to happen on March 29, 1708. This he is pleased to contradict absolutely in the almanack he has published for the present year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expression) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly asserts that he ' is not only now alive, but

was likewise alive upon that very 29th of March, when I had foretold he should die.' This is the subject of the present controversy between us ; which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness : in this dispute, I am sensible the eyes, not only of England, but of all Europe, will be upon us ; and the learned in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that side where they find most appearance of reason and truth

Without entering into criticisms of chronology about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. Partridge is not alive. And my first argument is thus : above a thousand gentlemen having bought his almanacks for this year, merely to find what he said against me, at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, ' they were sure no man alive ever writ such silly stuff as this.' Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed ; so that Mr. Partridge lies under a dilemma, either of disowning his almanack, or allowing himself to be no man alive. Secondly, Death is defined by all philosophers, a separation of the soul and body. Now it is certain, that the poor woman, who has best reason to know, has gone about for some time to every alley in the neighbourhood, and sworn to the gossips, that her husband had neither life nor soul in him. Therefore, if an uninformed carcass walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff does not think himself anyway answerable for that. Neither had the said carcass any right to beat the poor boy, who happened to pass by it in the street, crying, ' A full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death.'

Thirdly, Mr. Partridge pretends to tell fortunes, and recover stolen goods ; which all the parish says, he must

do by conversing with the devil, and other evil spirits : and no wise man will ever allow he could converse personally with either till after he was dead.

Fourthly, I will plainly prove him to be dead, out of his own almanack for this year, and from the very passage which he produces to make us think him alive. He there says, ' he is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very 29th of March, which I foretold he should die on : ' by this, he declares his opinion, that a man may be alive now who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And, indeed, there lies the sophistry of his argument. He dares not assert he was alive ever since that 29th of March, but that he ' is now alive and was so on that day : ' I grant the latter ; for he did not die till night as appears by the printed account of his death, in a letter to a lord ; and whether he be since revived, I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am ashamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fifthly, I will appeal to Mr. Partridge himself, whether it be probable I could have been so indiscreet, to begin my predictions with the only falsehood that ever was pretended to be in them ? And this in an affair at home, where I had so many opportunities to be exact ; and must have given such advantages against me to a person of Mr. Partridge's wit and learning, who, if he could possibly have raised one single objection more against the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have spared me.

And here I must take occasion to reprove the above-mentioned writer of the relation of Mr. Partridge's death, in a Letter to a Lord ; who was pleased to tax me with a mistake of four whole hours in my calculation of that event. I must confess, this censure, pronounced with an

air of certainty, in a matter that so nearly concerned me, and by a grave, judicious author, moved me not a little. But though I was all that time out of town, yet several of my friends, whose curiosity had led them to be exactly informed, (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter, I never once thought of it) assured me, I computed to something under half an hour ; which (I speak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude, that men should raise a clamour about it. I shall only say, it would not be amiss, if that author would henceforth be more tender of other men's reputation, as well as his own. It is well there were no more mistakes of that kind ; if there had, I presume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection against Mr. Partridge's death which I have sometimes met with, though indeed, very slightly offered, that he still continues to write almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all of that profession ; Gadbury, Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others, do yearly publish their almanacks, though several of them have been dead since before the Revolution. Now, the natural reason of this I take to be, that, whereas it is the privilege of authors to live after their death, almanack-makers are alone excluded ; because their dissertations, treating only upon the minutes as they pass, become useless as those go off. In consideration of which, Time, whose registers they are, gives them a lease in reversion, to continue their works after death. Or, perhaps, a name can *make* an almanack as well as it can *sell* one. And to strengthen this conjecture, I have heard the booksellers affirm, that they have desired Mr. Partridge to spare himself further trouble, and only lend them

his name, which could make almanacks much better than himself.

I should not have given the public, or myself, the trouble of this vindication, if my name had not been made use of by several persons to whom I never lent it ; one of which, a few days ago, was pleased to father on me a new set of predictions. But I think these are things too serious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I saw my labours, which had cost me so much thought and watching, bawled about by the common hawkers of Grub-street, which I only intended for the weighty consideration of the gravest persons. This prejudiced the world so much at first, that several of my friends had the assurance to ask me whether I were in jest ? to which I only answered coldly, ‘ that the event would show.’ But it is the talent of an age and nation, to turn things of the greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had verified all my predictions, out comes Mr. Partridge’s Almanack, disputing the point of his death ; so that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a necromancer had raised to life. If Mr. Partridge has practised the same experiment upon himself, and be again alive, long may he continue so ; that does not the least contradict my veracity : but I think I have clearly proved, by invincible demonstration, that he died, at farthest, within half an hour of the time I foretold.



## LETTERS

If nothing remained of Swift's writings but his letters, he would still take a high place among English writers. For raciness, humour and sheer literary value, they are worthy of a place beside those of Cowper, Walpole and Lamb. The genuine epistolary style—the art that really conceals art—is very difficult to define, but Swift produced it, and it may well be that his letters will outlive most of the other products of his pen. The *Journal to Stella*, consisting of the letters he wrote to her between 1710 and 1713, is the largest and most important section of his correspondence. The fascination of this work can only be fully appreciated by reading the whole collection. It reveals in Swift a tenderness and humanity that one would hardly surmise from a perusal of his other works, and presents a panorama of the political, literary and social life of the time without superior in history.

Swift's correspondents were numerous. It only required a sympathetic and understanding reader to draw out the best that was in him. There are innumerable records of his generosity towards the needy. He was as charitable to the poor as Dr. Johnson, and often busied himself in the interests of others to his own detriment and inconvenience. His letters to Addison, Arbuthnot, Gay, Stella, Vanessa and some few other kindred spirits are charming and fascinating. His letters to Pope are more guarded and artificial. Pope himself was writing his letters with one eye on posterity, and Swift gives the impression that he too was not going to abate one jot of his own pretensions to fame. Swift was speaking the simple truth when he boasted that he never leaned on his elbow when writing to friends. The abandon and downright gusto of his letters, their broad human sympathies, their frankness, their benevolence and their humour are beyond praise. Occasionally, it is true, these amiable qualities were tainted with a streak of rancour and gloom, but at the worst these lapses are only passing clouds. If indeed the real Swift is to be found in these letters—and letters are no bad test of character—we may safely acquit him of all the major sins against society. The selection here given is divided into three sections—(i) general letters, (ii) letters to Vanessa, (iii) *Journal to Stella*. Within these limits, the order is chronological.

## GENERAL LETTERS

I

To JOSEPH ADDISON.

DUBLIN, *August 22, 1710.*

SIR,

I looked long enough at the wind to set you safe at the other side. . . . I believe you had the displeasure of much ill news almost as soon as you landed. Even the moderate Tories here are in pain at these revolutions, being what will certainly affect the Duke of Marlborough, and, consequently, the success of the war. My Lord Lieutenant asked me yesterday when I intended for England. I said I had no business there now, since I suppose in a little time I should not have one friend left that had any credit; and his Excellency was of my opinion.

I never once began your [task] since you [left this] being perpetually prevented by all the company I kept, and especially Captain Pratt, to whom I am almost a domestic upon your account. I am convinced, that whatever government come over, you will find all marks of kindness from any Parliament here, with respect to your employment; the Tories contending with the Whigs which should speak best of you. Mr. Pratt says, he has received such marks of your sincerity and friendship, as he never can forget; and, in short, if you will come over again, when you are at leisure, we will raise an army, and make you King of Ireland. Can you think so meanly of a kingdom, as not to be pleased that every creature in it, who hath one grain of worth, has a veneration for you? I know there is nothing in this to make you add any value to yourself; but it ought to

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put you on valuing them, and to convince you that they are not an undistinguishing people.

On Thursday, the Bishop of Clogher, the two Pratts, and I, are to be as happy as Ireland will give us leave ; we are to dine with Mr. Paget at the Castle, and drink your health. The Bishop showed me the first volume of the small edition of the *Tatler*, where there is a very handsome compliment to me ; but I can never pardon the printing the news of every *Tatler*,—I think he might as well have printed the advertisements. I knew it was a bookseller's piece of craft, to increase the bulk and price of what he was sure would sell ; but I utterly disapprove it.

I beg you would freely tell me whether it will be of any account for me to come to England. I would not trouble you for advice, if I knew where else to ask it. We expect every day to hear of my Lord President's removal ; if he were to continue, I might, perhaps, hope for some of his good offices. You ordered me to give you a memorial of what I had in my thoughts. There were two things, Dr. So[u]th's prebend and sinecure, or the place of Historiographer. But if things go on in the train they are now, I shall only beg you, when there is an account to be depended on for a new government here, that you will give me early notice to procure an addition to my fortunes. And with saying so, I take my leave of troubling you with myself.

I do not desire to hear from you till you are out of [the] hurry at Malmesbury. I long till you have some good account of your Indian affairs, so as to make public business depend upon you, and not you upon that. I read your character in Mrs. Manley's noble Memoirs of

Europe. It seems to me, as if she had about two thousand epithets and fine words packed up in a bag ; and that she pulled them out by handfuls, and strewed them on her paper, where about once in five hundred times they happen to be right.

My Lord Lieutenant, we reckon, will leave us in a fortnight. I led him, by a question, to tell me he did not expect to continue in the Government, nor would, when all his friends were out. Pray take some occasion to let my [Lord] Halifax know the sense I have of the favour he intended me. I am with great respect, Sir,

Your most obedient and most obliged humble servant,

J. SWIFT.

## 2

TO ARCHBISHOP KING.

LONDON, *March* 8, 1710-11.

MY LORD,

I write to your Grace under the greatest disturbance of mind for the public and myself. A gentleman came in where I dined this afternoon, and told us Mr. Harley was stabbed, and some confused particulars. I immediately ran to Secretary St. John's hard by, but nobody was at home ; I met Mrs. St. John in her chair, who could not satisfy me, but was in pain about the Secretary, who as she heard, had killed the murderer. I went straight to Mr. Harley's where abundance of people were to inquire. I got young Mr. Harley to me : he said his father was asleep, and they hoped in no danger, and then told me the fact, as I shall relate it to your Grace.

This day the Marquis de Guiscard was taken up for high treason, by a warrant of Mr. St. John, and examined

before a committee of Council in Mr. St. John's office ; where were present, the Dukes of Ormond, Buckingham, Shrewsbury, Earl Poulett, Mr. Harley, Mr. St. John, and others. During examination, Mr. Harley observed Guiscard, who stood behind him, but on one side, swearing and looking disrespectfully. He told him he ought to behave himself better, while he was examined for such a crime. Guiscard immediately drew a penknife out of his pocket, which he had picked out of some of the offices, and reaching round, stabbed him just under the breast, a little to the right side ; but it pleased God that the point stopped at one of the ribs, and broke short half an inch. Immediately Mr. St. John rose, drew his sword, and ran it into Guiscard's breast. Five or six more of the Council drew and stabbed Guiscard in several places : but the Earl Poulett called out, for God's sake, to spare Guiscard's life, that he might be made an example ; and Mr. St. John's sword was taken from him and broke ; and the footmen without ran in, and bound Guiscard, who begged he might be killed immediately ; and they say, called out three or four times, ' my Lord Ormond, my Lord Ormond.' They say Guiscard resisted them a while, until the footmen came in.

Immediately Buissière the surgeon was sent for, who dressed Mr. Harley ; and he was sent home. The wound bled fresh, and they do not apprehend him in danger : he said, when he came home, he thought himself in none ; and when I was there he was asleep, and they did not find him at all feverish. He has been ill this week, and told me last Saturday he found himself much out of order, and has been abroad but twice since ; so that the only danger is, lest his being out of order should, with the wound, put

him in a fever ; and I shall be in mighty pain till to-morrow morning. I went back to poor Mrs. St. John, who told me, her husband was with my Lord Keeper, at Mr. Attorney's, and she said something to me very remarkable : that going to-day to pay her duty to the Queen, when all the men and ladies were dressed to make their appearance, this being the day of the Queen's accession, the Lady of the Bedchamber in waiting told her the Queen had not been at church, and saw no company ; yet, when she inquired her health, they said she was very well, only had a little cold. We conceive, the Queen's reasons for not going out, might be something about this seizing of Guiscard for high treason, and that perhaps there was some plot, or something extraordinary. Your Grace must have heard of this Guiscard : he fled from France for villainies there, and was thought on to head an invasion of that kingdom, but was not liked. I know him well, and think him a fellow of little consequence, although of some cunning, and much villany. We passed by one another this day in the Mall, at two o'clock, an hour before he was taken up ; and I wondered he did not speak to me.

I write all this to your Grace, because I believe you would desire to know a true account of so important an accident ; and besides, I know you will have a thousand false ones ; and I believe every material circumstance here is true, having it from young Mr. Harley. I met Sir Thomas Mansell—it was then after six this evening—and he and Mr. Prior told me, they had just seen Guiscard carried by in a chair, with a strong guard, to Newgate, or the Press Yard. Time, perhaps, will show who was at the bottom of all this ; but nothing could

happen so unluckily to England, at this juncture, as Mr. Harley's death; when he has all the schemes for the greatest part of the supplies in his head, and the Parliament cannot stir a step without him. Neither can I altogether forget myself, who, in him, should lose a person I have more obligations to than any other in this kingdom; who has always treated me with the tenderness of a parent, and never refused me any favour I asked for a friend; therefore I hope your Grace will excuse the disorder of this letter. I was intending, this night, to write one of another sort.

I must needs say, one great reason for writing these particulars to your Grace was, that you might be able to give a true account of the fact, which will be some sort of service to Mr. Harley. I am, with the greatest respect, my Lord,

Your Grace's most dutiful and most humble servant,  
JON. SWIFT.

I have read over what I writ, and find it confused and incorrect, which your Grace must impute to the violent pain of mind I am in, greater than ever I felt in my life. It must have been the utmost height of desperate guilt which could have spirited that wretch to such an action. I have not heard whether his wounds are dangerous; but I pray God he may recover, to receive his reward, and that we may learn the bottom of his villany. It is not above ten days ago, that I was interceding with the Secretary in his behalf, because I heard he was just starving; but the Secretary assured me he had four hundred pounds a year pension.

## 3

*To JOSEPH ADDISON.*

SIR,

*May 13, 1713.*

I was told yesterday, by several persons, that Mr. Steele had reflected upon me in his *Guardian*; which I could hardly believe, until, sending for the paper of the day, I found he had, in several parts of it, insinuated with the utmost malice, that I was author of the *Examiner*; and abused me in the grossest manner he could possibly invent, and set his name to what he had written. Now, Sir, if I am not author of the *Examiner*, how will Mr. Steele be able to defend himself from the imputation of the highest degree of baseness, ingratitude, and injustice? Is he so ignorant of my temper, and of my style? Has he never heard that the author of the *Examiner*, to whom I am altogether a stranger, did a month or two ago vindicate me from having any concern in it? Should not Mr. Steele have first expostulated with me as a friend? Have I deserved this usage from Mr. Steele, who knows very well that my Lord Treasurer has kept him in his employment upon my entreaty and intercession? My Lord Chancellor and Lord Bolingbroke will be witnesses, how I was reproached by my Lord Treasurer, upon the ill returns Mr. Steele made to his Lordship's indulgence, etc.

## 4

*RICHARD STEELE to SWIFT.*

SIR,

*May 19, 1713.*

Mr. Addison showed me your letter, wherein you mention me. They laugh at you, if they make you believe your interposition has kept me thus long in my

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office. If you have spoken in my behalf at any time, I am glad I have always treated you with respect ; though I believe you an accomplice of the *Examiner's*. In the letter you are angry at, you see I have no reason for being so merciful to him, but out of regard to the imputation you lie under. You do not in direct terms say you are not concerned with him ; but make it an argument of your innocence, that the *Examiner* has declared you have nothing to do with him. I believe I could prevail upon the *Guardian* to say there was a mistake in putting my name in his paper ; but the English would laugh at us, should we argue in so Irish a manner. I am heartily glad of your being made Dean of St. Patrick's. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

5

TO RICHARD STEELE.

SIR,

May 23, 1713.

... The case was thus : I did, with the utmost application, and desiring to lay all my credit upon it, desire Mr. Harley (as he was then called) to show you mercy. He said he would, and wholly upon my account : that he would appoint you a day to see him : that he would not expect you should quit any friend or principle. Some days after, he told me, he had appointed you a day, and you had not kept it ; upon which he reproached me, as engaging for more than I could answer, and advised me to more caution another time. I told him, and desired my Lord Chancellor and Lord Bolingbroke to be witnesses that I -----

opinion, you should have mercy till you gave further provocations. This is the history of what you think fit to call, in the spirit of insulting, their laughing at me ; and you may do it securely, for, by the most inhuman dealings, you have wholly put it out of my power, as a Christian, to do you the least ill office. Next I desire to know, whether the greatest services ever done by one man to another, may not have the same turn as properly applied to them ? And, once more, suppose they did laugh at me, I ask whether my inclinations to serve you merit to be rewarded by the vilest treatment, whether they succeeded or not ? If your interpretation were true, I was laughed at only for your sake ; which, I think, is going pretty far to serve a friend. As to the letter I complain of, I appeal to your most partial friends, whether you ought not either to have asked, or written to me, or desired to have been informed by a third hand, whether I were in any way concerned in writing the *Examiner* ? And if I had shuffled, or answered indirectly, or affirmed it, or said I would not give you satisfaction, you might then have wreaked your revenge with some colour of justice. I have several times assured Mr. Addison, and fifty others, that I had not the least hand in writing any of those papers ; and that I had never exchanged one syllable with the supposed author in my life, that I can remember, nor ever seen him above twice, and that in mixed company, in a place where he came to pay his attendance. One thing more I must observe to you, that a year or two ago, when some printers used to bring me their papers in manuscript, I absolutely forbid them to give any hints against Mr. Addison and you, and some others ; and have frequently struck out reflections

upon you in particular, and should, I believe, have done it still, if I had not wholly left off troubling myself about those kind of things.

I protest I never saw anything more liable to exception, than every part is of the letter you were pleased to write me. You plead that I do not in mine to Mr. Addison, in direct terms, say I am not concerned in the *Examiner*, and is that an excuse for the most savage injuries in the world a week before? How far you can prevail with the *Guardian*, I shall not trouble myself to inquire; and am more concerned how you will clear your own honour and conscience, than my reputation. I shall hardly lose one friend by what you [say:] I know not any [person who would] laugh at me for any [inaccurate] absurdity of yours. There are solecisms in morals as well as in languages; and to which of the virtues you will reconcile your conduct to me, is past my imagination. Be pleased to put these questions to yourself:—If Dr. Swift be entirely innocent of what I accuse him, how shall I be able to make him satisfaction? And how do I know but he may be entirely innocent? If he was laughed at only because he solicited for me, is that a sufficient reason for me to say the vilest things of him in print under my hand, without any provocation? And how do I know but he may be in the right, when he says I was kept in my employment at his interposition? If he never once reflected on me the least in any paper, and has hindered many others from doing it, how can I justify myself, for endeavouring in mine to ruin his credit as a Christian and a clergyman? I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J.S.

6

RICHARD STEELE to SWIFT.

SIR, BLOOMSBURY, *May* 26, 1713.

I have received yours, and find it impossible for a man to judge in his own case. For an allusion to you, as one under the imputation of helping the *Examiner*, and owning I was restrained out of respect to you, you tell Addison, under your hand, you think me the vilest of mankind, and bid him tell me so. I am obliged to you for any kind things said in my behalf to the Treasurer ; and assure you, when you were in Ireland, you were the constant subject of my talk to men in power at that time. As to the vilest of mankind, it would be a glorious world if I were : for I would not conceal my thoughts in favour of an injured man, though all the powers on earth gain-said it, to be made the first man in the nation. This position, I know, will ever obstruct my way in the world ; and I have conquered my desires accordingly. I have resolved to content myself with what I can get by my own industry, and the improvement of a small estate, without being anxious whether I am ever in a Court again or not. I do assure you, I do not speak this calmly, after the ill usage in your letter to Addison, out of terror of your wit, or my Lord Treasurer's power ; but pure kindness to the agreeable qualities I once so passionately delighted in, in you. You know, I know nobody ; but one that talked after you, could tell, ' Addison had bridled me in point of party.' This was ill hinted, both with relation to him, and, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

I know no party ; but the truth of the question is what

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I will support as well as I can, when any man I honour is attacked.

7

To RICHARD STEELE.

May 27, 1713.

SIR,

The reason I give you the trouble of this reply to your letter, is because I am going in a very few days to Ireland; and although I intended to return toward winter, yet it may happen, from the common accidents of life, that I may never see you again. In your yesterday's letter, you are pleased to take the complaining side, and think it hard I should write to Mr. Addison as I did, only for an allusion. This allusion was only calling a clergyman of some little distinction an infidel: a clergyman who was your friend, who always loved you, who had endeavoured at least to serve you, and who, whenever he did write anything, made it sacred to himself never to fling out the least hint against you.

One thing you are pleased to fix on me, as what you are sure of; that the *Examiner* had talked after me, when he said, 'Mr. Addison had bridled you in point of party.' I do not read one in six of those papers, nor ever knew he had such a passage; and I am so ignorant of this, that I cannot tell what it means: whether, that Mr. Addison kept you close to a party, or that he hindered you from writing about party. I never talked or writ to that author in my life, so that he could not have learned it from me; and in short, I solemnly affirm, that with relation to every friend I have, I am as innocent, as it is possible for a human creature to be; and whether you believe me or not, I think, with submission, you ought to act as if you

believed me, till you have demonstration to the contrary. I have all the Ministry to be my witnesses, that there is hardly a man of wit of the adverse party, whom I have not been so bold as to recommend often and with earnestness to them ; for I think, principles at present are quite out of the case, and that we dispute wholly about persons. In these last you and I differ ; but in the other I think, we agree, for I have in print professed myself in politics, to be what we formerly called a Whig.

As to the great man whose defence you undertake, though I do not think so well of him as you do, yet I have been the cause of preventing five hundred hard things being said against him. I am sensible I have talked too much when myself is the subject : therefore I conclude with sincere wishes for your health and prosperity, and am, Sir,

Yours, etc.

You cannot but remember, that in the only thing I ever published with my name, I took care to celebrate you as much as I could, and in as handsome a manner, though it was in a letter to the present Lord Treasurer.

## 8

*To the* EARL OF OXFORD.

*July 3, 1714.*

When I was with you, I have said more than once, that I would never allow quality or station made any real difference between men. Being now absent and forgotten, I have changed my mind. You have a thousand people who can pretend they love you, with as much appearance of sincerity as I, so that according to common justice I can have but a thousandth part in return of

what I give. And this difference is wholly owing to your station. And the misfortune is still the greater, because I always loved you just so much the worse for your station. For in your public capacity you have often angered me to the heart, but, as a private man, never once. So that if I only looked towards myself, I could wish you a private man to-morrow. For I have nothing to ask, at least nothing that you will give, which is the same thing, and then you would see whether I should not with much more willingness attend you in a retirement, whenever you pleased to give me leave, than ever I did at London or Windsor. From these sentiments I will never write to you, if I can help it, otherwise than as to a private person, nor allow myself to have been obliged by you in any other capacity.

The memory of one great instance of your candour and justice, I will carry to my grave, that having been in a manner domestic with you for almost four years, it was never in the power of any public or concealed enemy, to make you think ill of me, though malice and envy were often employed to that end. If I live, posterity shall know that and more, which, though you, and somebody that shall be nameless, seem to value less than I could wish, is all the return I can make you. Will you give me leave to say how I would desire to stand in your memory; as one, who was truly sensible of the honour you did him, though he was too proud to be vain upon it; as one, who was neither assuming, officious, nor teasing, who never wilfully misrepresented persons or facts to you, nor consulted his passions when he gave a character; and lastly, as one whose indiscretions proceeded altogether from a weak head, and not an ill heart?

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I will add one thing more, which is the highest compliment I can make, that I never was afraid of offending you, nor am now in any pain for the manner I write to you in. I have said enough; and, like one at your levee, having made my bow, I shrink back into the crowd.

## 9

TO ALEXANDER POPE.

DUBLIN, *June 28, 1715.*

My Lord Bishop of Clogher gave me your kind letter full of reproaches for my not writing. I am naturally no very exact correspondent, and when I leave a country without a probability of returning, I think as seldom as I can of what I loved or esteemed in it, to avoid the *desiderium* which of all things makes life most uneasy. But you must give me leave to add one thing, that you talk at your ease, being wholly unconcerned in public events: for if your friends the Whigs continue, you may hope for some favour; if the Tories return, you are at least sure of quiet. You know how well I loved both Lord Oxford and Bolingbroke, and how dear the Duke of Ormond is to me. Do you imagine I can be easy while their enemies are endeavouring to take off their heads? *I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.* Do you imagine I can be easy, when I think of the probable consequences of these proceedings, perhaps upon the very peace of the nation, but certainly of the minds of so many hundred thousand good subjects? Upon the whole, you may truly attribute my silence to the eclipse, but it was that eclipse which happened on the first of August.

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I borrowed your Homer from the Bishop—mine is not yet landed—and read it out in two evenings. If it pleases others as well as me, you have got your end in profit and reputation: yet I am angry at some bad rhymes and triplets, and pray in your next do not let me have so many unjustifiable rhymes to *war* and *gods*. I tell you all the faults I know, only in one or two places you are a little obscure: but I expected you to be so in one or two and twenty. I have heard no soul talk of it here, for indeed it is not come over; nor do we very much abound in judges—at least I have not the honour to be acquainted with them. Your notes are perfectly good, and so are your preface and essay. You were pretty bold in mentioning Lord Bolingbroke in that preface. I saw the Key to the Lock but yesterday: I think you have changed it a good deal, to adapt it to the present times.

God be thanked I have yet no parliamentary business, and if they have none with me, I shall never seek their acquaintance. I have not been very fond of them for some years past, not when I thought them tolerably good; and therefore if I can get leave to be absent, I shall be much inclined to be on that side when there is a Parliament on this: but truly I must be a little easy in my mind before I can think of Scriblerus.

You are to understand that I live in the corner of a vast unfurnished house. My family consists of a steward, a groom, a helper in the stable, a footman, and an old maid, who are all at board wages, and when I do not dine abroad, or make an entertainment, which last is very rare, I eat a mutton-pie, and drink half a pint of wine. My amusements are defending my small dominions against

the Archbishop, and endeavouring to reduce my rebellious choir. *Perditur haec inter misero lux.* I desire you will present my humble service to Mr. Addison, Mr. Congreve, and Mr. Rowe, and Gay. I am, and will be always,

Extremely yours, etc.

## 10

To LORD CARTERET.

April 28, 1724.

MY LORD,

Many of the principal persons in this kingdom, distinguished for their loyalty to his present Majesty, hearing that I had the honour to be known to your Excellency, have for some time pressed me very earnestly, since you were declared Lord Lieutenant of this kingdom, to represent to your Excellency the apprehensions they are under concerning Mr. Wood's patent for coining halfpence to pass in Ireland. Your Excellency knows the unanimous sentiments of the Parliament here upon that matter, and upon inquiry you will find that there is not one person of any rank or party in this whole kingdom, who does not look upon that patent as the most ruinous project that ever was contrived against any nation, neither is it doubted, that when your Excellency shall be thoroughly informed, your justice and compassion for an injured people will force you to employ your credit for their relief.

I have made bold to send you enclosed two small tracts on this subject; one written, as it is supposed, by the Earl of Abercorn, the other is entitled to a weaver, and suited to the vulgar, but thought to be the work of a better hand.

I hope your Excellency will forgive an old humble servant, and one who always loved and esteemed you, for interfering in matters out of his province; which he would never have done, if many of the greatest persons here had not, by their importunity, drawn him out of his retirement to venture giving you a little trouble, in hopes to save their country from utter destruction; for which the memory of your government will be blessed by posterity.

I hope to have the honour of seeing your Excellency here; and do promise neither to be a frequent visitor, nor troublesome solicitor; but ever, with the greatest respect, my Lord, remain,

Your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

JON. SWIFT.

11

To KNIGHTLEY CHETWODE.

LONDON, *April* 19, 1726.

SIR,

I have the favour of your letter of the 7th instant. As to the poem you mention, I know several copies of it have been given about, and [the] Lord Lieutenant told me he had one. It was written at Windsor near fourteen years ago, and dated. It was a task performed on a frolic among some ladies, and she it was addressed to died some time ago in Dublin, and on her death the copy [was] shown by her executor. I am very indifferent what is done with it, for printing cannot make it more common than it is; and for my own part, I forget what is in it, but believe it to be only a cavalier business, and they who will not give allowances may choose,

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and if they intend it maliciously, they will be disappointed, for it was what I expected, long before I left Ireland.

Therefore what you advise me, about printing it myself is impossible, for I never saw it since I writ it. Neither if I had, would I use shifts or arts, let people think of me as they please. Neither do I believe the gravest character is answerable for a private humorsome thing, which, by an accident inevitable, and the baseness of particular malice, is made public. I have borne a great deal more ; and those who will like me less, upon seeing me capable of having writ such a trifle so many years ago, may think as they please, neither is it agreeable to me to be troubled with such accounts, when there is no remedy, and only gives me the ungrateful task of reflecting on the baseness of mankind which I knew sufficiently before.

I know not your reasons for coming hither. Mine were only to see some old friends before my death, and some other little affairs, that related to my former course of life here. But I design to return by the end of summer. I should be glad to be settled here, but the inconvenience and charge of only being a passenger, is not so easy as an indifferent home, and the stir people make with me gives me neither pride nor pleasure. I have said enough and remain, Sir,

Yours, etc.

*Addressed*—To Knightley Chetwode, Esq.

*Endorsed*—Dr. Swift, from London, in answer to a letter

I wrote him concerning *Cadenus and Vanessa*. Sent by hand.

12

*To the REV. THOMAS SHERIDAN.**July 27, 1726.*

I have yours just now of the 19th, and the account you give me, is nothing but what I have some time expected with the utmost agonies, and there is one aggravation of constraint, that where I am I am forced to put on an easy countenance. It was at this time the best office your friendship could do, not to deceive me. I was violently bent all last year, as I believe you remember, that she should go to Montpelier, or Bath, or Tunbridge. I entreated, if there was no amendment, they might both come to London. But there was a fatality, although I indeed think her stamina could not last much longer, when I saw she could take no nourishment. I look upon this to be the greatest event that can ever happen to me; but all my preparations will not suffice to make me bear it like a philosopher, nor altogether like a Christian. There hath been the most intimate friendship between us from her childhood, and the greatest merit on her side, that ever was in one human creature toward another. Nay, if I were now near her, I would not see her; I could not behave myself tolerably, and should redouble her sorrow. Judge in what a temper of mind I write this. The very time I am writing, I conclude the fairest soul in the world hath left its body. Confusion! that I am this moment called down to a visitor, when I am in the country, and not in my power to deny myself.

I have passed a very constrained hour, and now return to say I know not what. I have been long weary of the world, and shall for my small remainder of years be

weary of life, having for ever lost that conversation, which could only make it tolerable. I fear while you are reading this, you will be shedding tears at her funeral ; she loved you well, and a great share of the little merit I have with you, is owing to her solicitations. I writ to you about a week ago.

## 13

‘ RICHARD SYMPSON ’ to BENJAMIN MOTTE.

LONDON, *August 8, 1726.*

SIR,

My cousin, Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, entrusted me some years ago with a copy of his travels, whereof that which I here send you is about a fourth part, for I shortened them very much, as you will find in my Preface to the Reader. I have shown them to several persons of great judgement and distinction, who are confident they will sell very well ; and, although some parts of this and the following volumes may be thought in one or two places to be a little satirical, yet it is agreed they will give no offence ; but in that you must judge for yourself, and take the advice of your friends, and if they or you be of another opinion, you may let me know it when you return these papers, which I expect shall be in three days at furthest. The good report I have received of you makes me put so great a trust into your hands, which I hope you will give me no reason to repent, and in that confidence I require that you will never suffer these papers to be once out of your sight.

As the printing these Travels will probably be of great value to you, so, as a manager for my friend and

cousin, I expect you will give a due consideration for it, because I know the author intends the profit for the use of poor seamen, and I am advised to say that two hundred pounds is the least sum I will receive on his account; but if it shall happen that the sale will not answer, as I expect and believe, then whatever shall be thought too much, even upon your own word, shall be duly repaid.

Perhaps you may think this a strange way of proceeding to a man of trade, but since I begin with so great a trust to you, whom I never saw, I think it not hard that you should trust me as much; therefore, if after three days' reading and consulting these papers you think it proper to stand to my agreement, you may begin to print them, and the subsequent parts shall be all sent you one after another in less than a week, provided that immediately upon your resolution to print them you do within three days deliver a bank-bill of two hundred pounds, wrapped up so as to make a parcel, to the hand from whence you receive this, who will come in the same manner exactly at nine o'clock on Thursday, which will be the 11th instant.

If you do not approve of this proposal, deliver these papers to the person who will come on Thursday. If you choose rather to send the papers, make no other proposal of your own, but just barely write on a piece of paper that you do not accept my offer. I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

RICHARD SYMPSON.

For Mr. Motte.

14

TO ALEXANDER POPE.

DUBLIN, *November 27, 1726.*

I am just come from answering a letter of Mrs. Howard's, writ in such mystical terms, that I should never have found out the meaning, if a book had not been sent me called *Gulliver's Travels*, of which you say so much in yours. I read the book over, and in the second volume observed several passages which appear to be patched and altered, and the style of a different sort, unless I am mistaken. Dr. Arbuthnot likes the projectors least ; others, you tell me, the flying island. Some think it wrong to be so hard upon whole bodies or corporations, yet the general opinion is, that reflections on particular persons are most to be blamed ; so that in these cases, I think the best method is to let censure and opinion take their course. A Bishop here said that book was full of improbable lies, and for his part, he hardly believed a word of it ; and so much for Gulliver.

Going to England is a very good thing, if it were not attended with an ugly circumstance of returning to Ireland. It is a shame you do not persuade your Ministers to keep me on that side, if it were but by a Court expedient of keeping me in prison for a plotter ; but at the same time I must tell you, that such journeys very much shorten my life, for a month here is longer than six at Twickenham.

How comes friend Gay to be so tedious ? Another man can publish fifty thousand lies sooner than he can publish fifty fables.

I am just going to perform a very good office : it is to

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assist, with the Archbishop, in degrading a parson who couples all our beggars, by which I shall make one happy man, and decide the great question of an indelible character in favour of the principles in fashion. This I hope you will represent to the Ministry in my favour as a point of merit : so farewell till I return.

I am come back, and have deprived the parson, who by a law here is to be hanged the next couple he marries. He declared to us that he resolved to be hanged, only desired that when he was to go to the gallows, the Archbishop would take off his excommunication. Is not he a good Catholic ? And yet he is but a Scotchman. This is the only Irish event I ever troubled you with, and I think it deserves notice. Let me add, that if I were Gulliver's friend, I would desire all my acquaintance to give out that his copy was basely mangled and abused, and added to, and blotted out by the printer ; for so to me it seems, in the second volume particularly. Adieu.

## LETTERS TO VANESSA

### 1

*To MISS ESTHER VANHOMRIGH.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, *September 3, 1712.*

I send this haunch of venison to your mother, not to you, and this letter to you, not your mother. I had your last, and your bill, and know your reasons. I have ordered Barber to send you the overplus sealed up : I am full of business and ill humour. Some end or other shall soon be put to both. I thought you would have been here yesterday. Is your journey hither quite

off ? I hope Moll is recovered of her illness, and then you may come. Have you escaped your share in this new fever ? I have hitherto, though of late I am not very well in my head.

You rally very well : Mr. Lewis allows you to do so. I read your letter to him. I have not time to answer, the coach and venison being just ready to go. Pray eat half an ounce at least of the venison, and present my humble service to your mother, Moll, and the Colonel. I had his letter, and will talk to him about it when he comes. This letter, I doubt, will smell of the venison. I wish the hang-dog coachman may not spoil the haunch in the carriage. *Je suis a vous*, etc.

*Addressed*—To Mrs. Esther Vanhomrigh, the younger, at her lodgings over against Park Place, in St. James's Street, London. Carriage paid.

## 2

*To* MISS ESTHER VANHOMRIGH.

UPPER LETCOMBE, NEAR WANTAGE,  
IN BERKSHIRE, *June 8, 1714.*

You see I am better than my word, and write to you before I have been a week settled in the house where I am. I have not much news to tell you from hence, nor have I had one line from any body since I left London, of which I am very glad. But, to say the truth, I believe I shall not stay here so long as I intended. I am at a clergyman's house, an old friend and an acquaintance, whom I love very well ; but he is such a melancholy thoughtful man, partly from nature, and partly by a solitary life, that I shall soon catch the spleen from him.

Out of ease and complaisance, I desire him not to alter any of his methods for me ; so we dine exactly between twelve and one, at eight we have some bread and butter and a glass of ale, and at ten he goes to bed. Wine is a stranger, except a little I sent him, of which, one evening in two, we have a pint between us. His wife has been this month twenty miles off, at her father's, and will not return these ten days. I never saw her, and perhaps the house will be worse when she comes. I read all day, or walk, and do not speak as many words as I have now writ, in three days ; so that, in short, I have a mind to steal to Ireland, unless I feel myself take more to this way of living, so different, in every circumstance, from what I left. This is the first syllable I have writ to anybody since you saw me. I shall be glad to hear from you, not as you are a Londoner, but a friend ; for I care not threepence for news, nor have heard one syllable since I came here. The Pretender, or Duke of Cambridge, may both be landed, and I never the wiser. But if this place were ten times worse, nothing shall make me return to town while things are in the situation I left them. I give a guinea a week for my board, and can eat anything. I hope you are in good health and humour. My service to Moll. My cold is quite gone.

*A vous, etc.*

## 3

TO MISS ESTHER VANHOMRIGH.

*Monday morning, December 6, 1714.*

I will see you in a day or two, and believe me it goes to my soul not to see you oftener. I will give you the best advice, countenance, and assistance I can. I would

have been with you sooner if a thousand impediments had not prevented me. I did not imagine you had been under difficulties. I am sure my whole fortune should go to remove them. I cannot see you, I fear, to-day, having affairs of my place to do ; but pray think it not want of friendship or tenderness, which I will always continue to the utmost.

## 4

TO MISS ESTHER VANHOMRIGH.

*August 13, 1720.*

I apprehended, on the return of the porter I sent with my last letter, that it would miscarry, because I saw the rogue was drunk ; but yours made me easy. I must neither write to Molkin, nor not write to her. You are like Lord Pembroke, who would neither go nor stay. Glassheel talks of going to see you, and taking me with him, as he goes to his country house. I find you have company with you these two or three days ; I hope they are diverting, at least to poor Molkin. Why should Cad's letters be difficult ? I assure you [Vanessa]'s are not [at] all. I am vexed that the weather hinders you from any pleasure in the country, because walking, I believe, would be of good use to you and Molkin. I reckon you will return a prodigious scholar, a most admirable nurse-keeper, a perfect housewife, and a great drinker of coffee.

I have asked, and am assured there is not one beech in all your groves to carve a name on, nor purling stream for love or money, except a great river which sometimes roars, but never murmurs, just like Governor Huff. We live here in a very dull town, every valuable creature

absent, and Cad says he is weary of it, and would rather drink his coffee on the barrenest mountain in Wales, than be king here :

A fig for partridges and quails—  
Ye dainties, I know nothing of ye ;  
But on the highest mount in Wales  
Would choose in peace to drink my coffee.

And you know very well that coffee makes us severe, and grave, and philosophical.

What would you give to have the history of Cad[enus] and [Vanessa], exactly written, through all its steps, from the beginning to this time ? I believe it would do well in verse, and be as long as the other. I hope it will be done. It ought to be an exact chronicle of twelve years from [December 1707], the time of spilling of coffee, to drinking of coffee, from Dunstable to Dublin, with every single passage since. There would be the chapter of Madame going to Kensington ; the chapter of the blister ; the chapter of the Colonel going to France ; the chapter of the wedding, with the adventures of the lost key ; of the sham ; of the joyful return ; two hundred chapters of madness ; the chapter of long walks ; the Berkshire surprise ; fifty chapters of little times ; the chapter of Chelsea ; the chapter of swallow and cluster ; a hundred whole books of myself, etc. ; the chapter of hide and whisper ; the chapter of who made it so ; my sister's money.

Cad bids me tell you, that if you complain of difficult writing, he will give you enough of it. See how much I have written without saying one word of Molkin ; and you will be whipped before you will deliver a message with honour. I shall write to J[ohn] Barber next post,

and desire him to be in no pain about his money. I will take not one word of notice of his riches, on purpose to vex him. If Heaven had looked upon riches to be a valuable thing, it would not have given them to such a scoundrel. I delivered your letter, enclosed, to our friend, who happened to be with me when I received it. I find you are very much in his good grace, for he said a million of fine things upon it, though he would let nobody read a word of it but himself, though I was so kind to show him yours to me, as well as this, which he has laid a crown with me you will not understand, which is pretty odd for one that sets up for so high an opinion of your good sense. I am ever, with the greatest truth,  
Yours, etc.

## JOURNAL TO STELLA

## 1

LONDON, *October 31, 1710.*

So, now I have sent my seventh to your fourth, young women; and now I will tell you what I would not in my last, that this morning, sitting in my bed, I had a fit of giddiness: the room turned round for about a minute, and then it went off, leaving me sickish, but not very: and so I passed the day as I told you; but I would not end a letter with telling you this, because it might vex you: and I hope in God I shall have no more of it. I saw Dr. Cockburn to-day, and he promises to send me the pills that did me good last year, and likewise has promised me an oil for my ear, that he has been making for that ailment for somebody else.

Nov. 1. I wish MD a merry new year. You know this

is the first day of it with us. I had no giddiness to-day, but I drank brandy, and have bought a pint for two shillings. I sat up the night before my giddiness pretty late, and writ very much ; so I will impute it to that. But I never eat fruit, nor drink ale, but drink better wine than you do, as I did to-day with Mr. Addison at Lord Mountjoy's : then went at five to see Mr. Harley, who could not see me for much company ; but sent me his excuse, and desired I would dine with him on Friday ; and then I expect some answer to this business, which must either be soon done, or begun again ; and then the Duke of Ormond and his people will interfere for their honour and do nothing. I came home at six, and spent my time in my chamber, without going to the coffee-house, which I grow weary of ; and I studied at leisure, writ not above forty lines, some inventions of my own, and some hints, and read not at all, and this because I would take care of Presto, for fear little MD should be angry.

2. I took my four pills last night, and they lay an hour in my throat, and so they will do to-night. I suppose I could swallow four affronts as easily. I dined with Dr. Cockburn to-day, and came home at seven ; but Mr. Ford has been with me till just now, and 'tis near eleven. I have had no giddiness to-day. Mr. Dopping I have seen, and he tells me coldly, my *Shower* is liked well enough ; there is your Irish judgment. I writ this post to the Bishop of Clogher. 'Tis now just a fortnight since I heard from you. I must have you write once a fortnight, and then I'll allow for wind and weather. How goes ombre ? does Mrs. Walls win constantly, as she used to do ; and Mrs. Stoyte ? I have not thought of her this long time ; how does she ? I find we have a cargo of Irish coming for

London : I am sorry for it ; but I never go near them. And Tighe is landed ; but Mrs. Wesley, they say, is going home to her husband, like a fool. Well, little monkies mine, I must go write ; and so good night.

3. I ought to read these letters I write, after I have done ; for looking over thus much I found two or three literal mistakes, which should not be when the hand is so bad. But I hope it does not puzzle little Dingley to read, for I think I mend : but methinks when I write plain, I don't know how, but we are not alone, all the world can see us. A bad scrawl is so snug, it looks like a PMD. We have scurvy Tatlers of late ; so pray do not suspect me. I have one or two hints I design to send him, and never any more ; he does not deserve it. He is governed by his wife most abominably, as bad as ——. I never saw her since I came ; nor has he ever made me an invitation ; either he dares not, or is such a thoughtless Tisdall fellow, that he never minds it. So what care I for his wit ? for he is the worst company in the world, till he has a bottle of wine in his head. I cannot write straighter in bed, so you must be content.—At night in bed. Stay, let me see where is this letter to MD among these papers ? oh ! here. Well, I will go on now ; but I am very busy, (smoke the new pen). I dined with Mr. Harley to-day, and am invited there again on Sunday. I have now leave to write to the Primate and Archbishop of Dublin, that the Queen has granted the First Fruits ; but they are to take no notice of it, till a letter is sent them by the Queen's order from Lord Dartmouth, Secretary of State, to signify it. The Bishops are to be made a corporation to dispose of the revenue, &c., and I shall write to the Archbishop of Dublin to-morrow, (I have had no giddiness to-day). I



know not whether they will have any occasion for me longer to be here ; nor can I judge till I see what letter the Queen sends to the Bishops, and what they will do upon it. If dispatch be used, it may be done in six weeks ; but I cannot judge. They sent me to-day a new commission, signed by the Primate and Archbishop of Dublin, and promise me letters to the two Archbishops here ; but mine a— for it all. The thing is done, and has been so these ten days ; though I had only leave to tell it to-day. I had this day likewise a letter from the Bishop of Clogher, who complains of my not writing ; and what vexes me, says he knows you have long letters from me every week. Why do you tell him so ? 'Tis not right, faith : but I won't be angry with MD at a distance. I writ to him last post, before I had his, and will write again soon, since I see he expects it, and that Lord and Lady Mountjoy put him off upon me to give themselves ease. Lastly, I had this day a letter from a certain naughty rogue called MD, and it was N. 5, which I shall not answer to-night, I thank you. No, faith, I have other fish to fry ; but to-morrow or next day will be time enough. I have put MD's commissions in a memorandum paper. I think I have done all before, and remember nothing but this to-day about glasses, and spectacles, and spectacle cases. I have no commission from Stella, but the chocolate and handkerchiefs ; and those are bought, and I expect they will be soon sent. I have been with, and sent to, Mr. Sterne, two or three times to know, but he was not within. Odds my life, what am I doing ? I must go write, and do business.

4. I dined to-day at Kensington, with Addison, Steele, &c., came home, and writ a short letter to the Archbishop

of Dublin, to let him know the Queen has granted the thing, &c. I writ in the coffee-house, for I staid at Kensington till nine, and am plaguy weary ; for Colonel Proud was very ill company, and I will never be of a party with him again : and I drank punch, and that and ill company has made me hot.

5. I was with Mr. Harley from dinner to seven this night, and went to the coffee-house, where Dr. D'Avenant would fain have had me gone and drink a bottle of wine at his house hard by, with Dr. Chamberlain ; but the puppy used so many words, that I was afraid of his company ; and, though we promised to come at eight, I sent a messenger to him, that Chamberlain was going to a patient, and therefore we would put it off till another time : so he, and the comptroller, and I, were prevailed on, by Sir Matthew Dudley, to go to his house, where I staid till twelve, and left them. D'Avenant has been teasing me to look over some of his writings that he is going to publish ; but the rogue is so fond of his own productions, that I hear he will not part with a syllable ; and he has lately put out a foolish pamphlet, called, *The Third Part of Tom Double* ; to make his court to the Tories, whom he had left.

6. I was to-day gambling in the city to see Patty Rolt, who is going to Kingston, where she lodges ; but, to say the truth, I had a mind for a walk to exercise myself, and happened to be disengaged ; for dinners are ten times more plentiful with me here than ever, or than in Dublin. I won't answer your letter yet, because I am busy. I hope to send this before I have another from MD : 'twould be a sad thing to answer two letters together, as MD does from Presto. But when the two sides are full, away the

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letter shall go, that's certain, like it or not like it ; and that will be about three days hence, for the answering night will be a long one.

7. I dined to-day at Sir Richard Temple's, with Congreve, Vanbrugh, Lieutenant-General Farrington, &c. Vanbrugh, I believe I told you, had a long quarrel with me about those verses on his house ; but we were very civil and cold. Lady Marlborough used to tease him with them, which had made him angry, though he be a good-natured fellow. It was a thanksgiving day, and I was at court, where the Queen passed by us with all Tories about her ; not one Whig : Buckingham, Rochester, Leeds, Shrewsbury, Berkeley of Stratton, Lord Keeper Harcourt, Mr. Harley, Lord Pembroke, &c., and I have seen her without one Tory. The Queen made me a curtsy, and said, in a sort of familiar way to Presto, How does MD ? I considered she was a Queen, and so excused her. I do not miss the Whigs at court ; but have as many acquaintances there as formerly.

8. Here's ado and a clutter ! I must now answer MD's fifth ; but first you must know I dined at the Portugal envoy's to-day, with Addison, Vanbrugh, Admiral Wager, Sir Richard Temple, Methuen, &c. I was weary of their company, and stole away at five, and came home like a good boy, and studied till ten, and had a fire ; O ho ! and now am in bed. I have no fire-place in my bed-chamber ; but 'tis very warm weather when one's in bed. Your fine cap, Madam Dingley, is too little, and too hot : I'll have that fur taken off ; I wish it were far enough ; and my old velvet cap is good for nothing. Is it velvet under the fur ? I was feeling, but cannot find : if it be, 'twill do without it, else I will face it ; but then I

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must buy new velvet : but may be I may beg a piece. What shall I do ? well, now to rogue MD's letter. God be thanked for Stella's eyes mending ; and God send it holds ; but faith you write too much at a time ; better write less, or write it at ten times. Yes, faith, a long letter in a morning from a dear friend is a dear thing. I smoke a compliment, little mischievous girls, I do so. But who are those *wiggs* that think I am turned Tory ? Do you mean Whigs ? Which *wiggs*, and *wat* do you mean ? I know nothing of Raymond, and only had one letter from him a little after I came here. (Pray remember Morgan.) Raymond is indeed like to have much influence over me in London, and to share much of my conversation. I shall no doubt introduce him to Harley, and Lord Keeper, and the Secretary of State. The Tatler upon Ithuriel's spear is not mine, madam. What a puzzle there is between you and your judgment ? In general you may be sometimes sure of things, as that about *style*, because it is what I have frequently spoken of ; but guessing is mine a-- ; and I defy mankind if I please. Why, I writ a pamphlet when I was last in London, that you and a thousand have seen, and never guessed it to be mine. Could you have guessed the *Shower in Town* to be mine ? How chance you did not see that before your last letter went ? But I suppose you in Ireland did not think it worth mentioning. Nor am I suspected for the lampoon : only Harley said he smoked me, (have I told you so before ?) and some others knew it. 'Tis called the *Rod of Sid Hamet*. And I have written several other things that I hear commended, and nobody suspects me for them ; nor you shall not know till I see you again. What do you mean ' That boards near me, that I dine with now and

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then ? ' I know no such person : I do not dine with boarders. What the pox ! You know whom I have dined with every day since I left you, better than I do. What do you mean, sirrah ? Slids, my ailment has been over these two months almost. Impudence, if you vex me, I will give ten shillings a week for my lodging ; for I am almost st—k out of this with the sink, and it helps me to verses in my *Shower*. Well, Madam Dingley, what say you to the world to come ? What ballad ? Why go look, it was not good for much : have patience till I come back ; patience is a gay thing as, &c. I hear nothing of Lord Mountjoy's coming for Ireland. When is Stella's birthday ? in March ? Lord bless me, my turn at Christ Church ; it is so natural to hear you write about that, I believe you have done it a hundred times ; it is as fresh in my mind, the verger coming to you ; and why to you ? would he have you preach for me ? O, pox on your spelling of Latin. *Jonsonibus atque*, that's the way. How did the Dean get that name by the end ? 'Twas you betrayed me : not I, faith ; I'll not break his head. Your mother is still in the country, I suppose, for she promised to see me when she came to town. I writ to her four days ago, to desire her to break it to Lady Giffard, to put some money for you in the Bank, which was then fallen thirty *per cent*. Would to God mine had been here, I should have gained one hundred pounds, and got as good interest as in Ireland, and much securer. I would fain have borrowed three hundred pounds ; but money is so scarce here, there is no borrowing by this fall of stocks. 'Tis rising now, and I knew it would : it fell from one hundred and twenty-nine to ninety-six. I have not heard since from your mother. Do you think I would be so unkind

not to see her, that you desire me in a style so melancholy? Mrs. Raymond you say is with child : I am sorry for it, and so is, I believe, her husband. Mr. Harley speaks all the kind things to me in the world ; and I believe, would serve me, if I were to stay here ; but I reckon in time the Duke of Ormond may give me some addition to Laracor. Why should the Whigs think I came to England to leave them ? Sure my journey was no secret ! I protest sincerely, I did all I could to hinder it, as the Dean can tell you, although now I do not repent it. But who the devil cares what they think ? Am I under obligations in the least to any of them all ? Rot 'em, for ungrateful dogs ; I will make them repent their usage before I leave this place. They say here the same thing of my leaving the Whigs ; but they own they cannot blame me, considering the treatment I have had. I will take care of your spectacles, as I told you before, and of the Bishop of Killala's ; but I will not write to him, I han't time. What do you mean by my fourth, Madam *Dinglibus* ? Does not Stella say you have had my fifth, Goody Blunder ? you frightened me till I looked back. Well, this is enough for one night. Pray give my humble service to Mrs. Stoyte and her sister, Kate is it or Sarah ? I have forgot her name, faith. I think I will even (and to Mrs. Walls and the archdeacon) send this to-morrow : no, faith, that will be in ten days from the last. I will keep it till Saturday, though I write no more. But what if a letter from MD should come in the mean time ? why then I would only say, madam, I have received your sixth letter ; your most humble servant to command, Presto ; and so conclude. Well, now I will write and think a little, and so to bed, and dream of MD.

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9. I have my mouth full of water, and was going to spit it out, because I reasoned with myself, how could I write when my mouth was full. Han't you done things like that, reasoned wrong at first thinking ? Well, I was to see Mr. Lewis this morning, and am to dine a few days hence, as he tells me, with Mr. Secretary St. John ; and I must contrive to see Harley soon again, to hasten this business from the Queen. I dined to-day at Lord Mont-rath's, with Lord Mountjoy, &c., but the wine was not good, so I came away, staid at the coffee-house till seven, then came home to my fire, the maidenhead of my second half bushel, and am now in bed at eleven, as usual. 'Tis mighty warm ; yet I fear I shall catch cold this wet weather, if I sit an evening in my room after coming from warm places : and I must make much of myself, because MD is not here to take care of Presto ; and I am full of business, writing, &c., and don't care for the coffee-house ; and so this serves for all together, not to tell it you over and over, as silly people do ; but Presto is a wiser man, faith, than so, let me tell you, gentlewomen. See I am got to the third side ; but, faith, I will not do that often : but I must say something early to-day, till the letter is done, and on Saturday it shall go ; so I must save something till to-morrow, till to-morrow and next day.

10. O Lord, I would this letter was with you with all my heart : if it should miscarry, what a deal would be lost ? I forgot to leave a gap in the last line but one for the seal, like a puppy ; but I should have allowed for night, good night : but when I am taking leave, I cannot leave a bit, faith ; but I fancy the seal will not come there. I dined to-day at Lady Lucy's, where they ran down my

*Shower* ; and said *Sid Hamet* was the silliest poem they ever read, and told Prior so, whom they thought to be the author of it. Don't you wonder I never dined there before? But I am too busy, and they live too far off ; and besides, I do not like women so much as I did. [MD you must know, are not women.] I supped to-night at Addison's with Garth, Steele, and Mr. Dopping ; and am come home late. Lewis has sent to me to desire I will dine with some company I shall like. I suppose it is Mr. Secretary St. John's appointment. I had a letter just now from Raymond, who is at Bristol, and says he will be at London in a fortnight, and leave his wife behind him ; and desires any lodging in the house where I am : but that must not be. I shan't know what to do with him in town : to be sure I will not present him to any acquaintance of mine, and he will live a delicate life, a parson and a perfect stranger. Paaast twelvve o'clock, and so good night, &c. O ! but I forgot, Jemmy Leigh is come to town ; says he has brought Dingley's things, and will send them by the first convenience. My parcel, I hear, is not sent yet. He thinks of going for Ireland in a month, &c. I cannot write to-morrow, because—what, because of the Archbishop ; because I will seal my letter early ; because I am engaged from noon till night ; because of many kind of things ; and yet I will write one or two words to-morrow morning, to keep up my journal constant, and at night I will begin the ninth.

11. Morning, by candle-light. You must know that I am in my night-gown every morning betwixt six and seven, and Patrick is forced to ply me fifty times before I can get on my night-gown ; and so now I will take my leave of my own dear MD, for this letter, and begin my



next when I come home at night. God Almighty bless and protect dearest MD. Farewell, &c.

This letter's as long as a sermon, faith.

## 2

LONDON, *October 9, 1711.*

I was forced to lie down at twelve to-day, and mend my night's sleep : I slept till after two, and then sent for a bit of mutton and pot of ale from the next cook's shop, and had no stomach. I went out at four, and called to see Biddy Floyd, which I had not done these three months : she is something marked, but has recovered her complexion quite, and looks very well. Then I sat the evening with Mrs. Vanhomrigh, and drank coffee, and ate an egg. I likewise took a new lodging to-day, not liking a ground-floor, nor the ill smell, and other circumstances. I lodge, or shall lodge, by Leicester Fields, and pay ten shillings a week ; that won't hold out long, faith. I shall lie here but one night more. It rained terribly till one o'clock to-day. I lie, for I shall lie here two nights, till Thursday, and then remove. Did I tell you that my friend Mrs. Barton has a brother drowned, that went on the expedition with Jack Hill ? He was a lieutenant-colonel, and a coxcomb ; and she keeps her chamber in form, and the servants say, she receives no messages.— Answer MD's letter, Presto, d'ye hear ? No, says Presto, I won't yet, I'm busy ; you're a saucy rogue. Who talks ?

10. It cost me two shillings in coach-hire to dine in the city with a printer. I have sent, and caused to be sent, three pamphlets out in a fortnight. I will ply the rogues warm ; and whenever anything of theirs makes a noise,

it shall have an answer. I have instructed an under spur-leather to write so, that it is taken for mine. A rogue that writes a newspaper, called *The Protestant Post Boy*, has reflected on me in one of his papers ; but the Secretary has taken him up, and he shall have a squeeze extraordinary. He says, that an ambitious tantivy, missing of his towering hopes of preferment in Ireland, is come over to vent his spleen on the late ministry, &c. I'll tantivy him with a vengeance. I sat the evening at home, and am very busy, and can hardly find time to write, unless it were to MD. I am in furious haste.

11. I dined to-day with Lord-Treasurer. Thursdays are now his days when his choice company comes, but we are too much multiplied. George Granville sent his excuses upon being ill ; I hear he apprehends the apoplexy, which would grieve me much. Lord-Treasurer calls Prior nothing but Monsieur Baudrier, which was the feigned name of the Frenchman that writ his Journey to Paris. They pretend to suspect me, so I talk freely of it, and put them out of their play. Lord-Treasurer calls me now Dr. Martin, because martin is a sort of a swallow, and so is a swift. When he and I came last Monday from Windsor, we were reading all the signs on the road. He is a pure trifler ; tell the Bishop of Clogher so. I made him make two lines in verse for the Bell and Dragon, and they were rare bad ones. I suppose Dilly is with you by this time : what could his reason be of leaving London and not owning it ? 'Twas plaguy silly. I believe his natural inconstancy made him weary. I think he is the king of inconstancy. I staid with Lord-Treasurer till ten ; we had five lords and three commoners. Go to ombre, sirrahs.

12. Mrs. Vanhomrigh has changed her lodging as well

as I. I dined with her to-day ; for though she boards, her landlady does not dine with her. I am grown a mighty lover of herrings ; but they are much smaller here than with you. In the afternoon I visited an old major-general, and eat six oysters ; then sat an hour with Mrs. Colledge, the joiner's daughter that was hanged ; it was the joiner was hanged, and not his daughter ; with Thompson's wife, a magistrate. There was the famous Mrs. Floyd of Chester, who, I think, is the handsomest woman (except MD) that ever I saw. She told me, that twenty people had sent her the verses upon Biddy, as meant to her : and, indeed, in point of handsomeness, she deserves them much better : I will not go to Windsor to-morrow, and so I told the Secretary to-day. I hate the thoughts of Saturday and Sunday suppers with Lord-Treasurer. Jack Hill is come home from his unfortunate expedition, and is, I think, now at Windsor : I have not yet seen him. He is privately blamed by his own friends for want of conduct. He called a council of war, and therein it was determined to come back. But they say, a general should not do that, because the officers will always give their opinion for returning, since the blame will not lie upon them, but the general. I pity him heartily. Bernage received his commission to-day.

13. I dined to-day with Colonel Crowe, late governor of Barbadoes ; he is a great acquaintance of your friend Sterne, to whom I trusted the box. Lord-Treasurer has refused Sterne's business, and I doubt he is a rake ; Jemmy Leigh stays for him, and nobody knows where to find him. I am so busy now, I have hardly time to spare to write to our little MD ; but in a fortnight I hope it will be over. I am going now to be busy, &c.

14. I was going to dine with Dr. Cockburn, but Sir Andrew Fountaine met me, and carried me to Mrs. Van's, where I drank the last bottle of Raymond's wine, admirable good, better than any I get among the ministry. I must pick up time to answer this letter of MD's; I'll do it in a day or two for certain.—I am glad I am not at Windsor, for it is very cold, and I won't have a fire till November. I am contriving how to stop up my grate with bricks. Patrick was drunk last night; but did not come to me, else I should have given him t'other cuff. I sat this evening with Mrs. Barton; it is the first day of her seeing company; but I made her merry enough, and we were three hours disputing upon Whig and Tory. She grieved for her brother only for form, and he was a sad dog. Is Stella well enough to go to church, pray? no numbings left? no darkness in your eyes? do you walk and exercise? Your exercise is ombre.—People are coming up to town: the Queen will be at Hampton Court in a week. Lady Betty Germain, I hear, is come; and Lord Pembroke is coming.

15. I sat at home till four this afternoon to-day writing, and ate a roll and butter; then visited Will. Congreve an hour or two, and supped with Lord-Treasurer, who came from Windsor to-day, and brought Prior with him. The Queen has thanked Prior for his good service in France, and promised to make him a Commissioner of the Customs. Several of that commission are to be out; among the rest, my friend Sir Matthew Dudley. I can do nothing for him, he is so hated by the ministry. Lord-Treasurer kept me till twelve, so I need not tell you it is now late.

16. I dined to-day with Mr. Secretary at Dr. Cotes-

worth's, where he now lodges till his house be got ready in Golden Square. One Boyer, a French dog, has abused me in a pamphlet, and I have got him up in a messenger's hands : the Secretary promises me to swinge him. Lord-Treasurer told me last night, that he had the honour to be abused with me in a pamphlet. I must make that rogue an example, for warning to others. I was to see Jack Hill this morning, who made that unfortunate expedition ; and there is still more misfortune ; for that ship, which was admiral of his fleet, is blown up in the Thames, by an accident and carelessness of some rogue, who was going, as they think, to steal some gunpowder : five hundred men are lost. We don't yet know the particulars. I am got home by seven, and am going to be busy, and you are going to play and supper ; you live ten times happier than I : but I should live ten times happier than you if I were with MD. I saw Jemmy Leigh to-day in the street, who tells me that Sterne has not lain above once these three weeks in his lodgings, and he doubts he takes ill courses ; he stays only till he can find Sterne to go along with him, and he cannot hear of him. I begged him to inquire about the box when he comes to Chester, which he promises.

17. The Secretary and I dined to-day with Brigadier Britton, a great friend of his. The lady of the house is very gallant, about thirty-five ; she is said to have a great deal of wit ; but I see nothing among any of them that equals MD by a bar's length, as hope saved. My Lord-Treasurer is much out of order ; he has a sore throat, and the gravel, and a pain in his breast where the wound was : pray God preserve him. The Queen comes to Hampton Court on Tuesday next ; people are coming fast to town, and I must answer MD's letter, which I can hardly find

time to do, though I am at home the greatest part of the day. Lady Betty Germain and I were disputing Whig and Tory to death this morning. She is grown very fat, and looks mighty well. Biddy Floyd was there, and she is, I think, very much spoiled with the small-pox.

18. Lord-Treasurer is still out of order, and that breaks our method of dining there to-day. He is often subject to a sore throat, and some time or other it will kill him, unless he takes more care than he is apt to do. It was said about the town, that poor Lord Peterborow was dead at Frankfort ; but he is something better, and the Queen is sending him to Italy, where I hope the warm climate will recover him : he has abundance of excellent qualities, and we love one another mightily. I was this afternoon in the city, ate a bit of meat, and settled some things with a printer. I will answer your letter on Saturday, if possible, and then send away this ; so to fetch up the odd days I lost at Windsor, and keep constant to my fortnight. Ombre time is now coming on, and we shall have nothing but Manley, and Walls, and Stoytes, and the Dean. Have you got no new acquaintance ? Poor girls ; nobody knows MD's good qualities.—'Tis very cold ; but I will not have a fire till November, that's pozz.—Well, but coming home to-night, I found on my table a letter from MD ; faith I was angry, that is with myself ; and I was afraid to see MD's hand so soon, for fear of something, I don't know what : at last I opened it, and it was over well, and a bill for the two hundred guineas. However, 'tis a sad thing that this letter is not gone, nor your twenty-first answered yet.

19. I was invited to-day to dine with Mrs. Van, with some company who did not come ; but I ate nothing but

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herrings ; you must know I hardly ever eat of above one thing, and that the plainest ordinary meat at table ; I love it best, and believe it wholesomest. You love rarities ; yes you do ; I wish you had all that I ever see where I go. I was coming home early, and met the Secretary in his chair, who persuaded me to go with him to Britton's ; ~for he said he had been all day at business, and had eaten nothing. So I went, and the time past so, that we staid till two, so you may believe 'tis late enough.

20. This day has gone all wrong, by sitting up so late last night. Lord-Treasurer is not yet well, and can't go to Windsor. I dined with Sir Matthew Dudley, and took occasion to hint to him that he would lose his employment, for which I am very sorry. Lord Pembroke and his family are all come to town. I was kept so long at a friend's this evening that I cannot send this to-night. When I knocked at my lodgings, a fellow asked me where lodged Dr. Swift ? I told him I was the person : he gave me a letter he brought from the Secretary's office, and I gave him a shilling : when I came up, I saw Dingley's hand : faith I was afraid, I do not know what. At last it was a formal letter from Dingley about her exchequer business. Well, I'll do it on Monday, and settle it with Tooke. And now, boys, for your letter, I mean the first, N. 21. Let's see ; come out, little letter. I never had the letter from the Bishop that Raymond mentions ; but I have written to Ned Southwell, to desire the Duke of Ormond to speak to His Reverence, that he may leave off his impertinence. What a pox can they think I am doing for the Archbishop here ? You have a pretty notion of me in Ireland, to make me an agent for the Archbishop of Dublin.—Why ; do you think I value your people's

ingratitude about my part in serving them ? I remit them their First-Fruits of ingratitude, as freely as I got the other remitted to them. The Lord-Treasurer defers writing his letter to them, or else they would be plaguily confounded by this time. For, he designs to give the merit of it wholly to the Queen and me, and to let them know it was done before the Duke of Ormond was Lord-Lieutenant. You visit, you dine abroad, you see friends ; you pilgarlic ; you walk from Finglass, you a cat's foot. O Lord—Lady Gore hung her child by the *waist* : what is that waist ? I don't understand that word ; he must hang on till you explain or spell it.—I don't believe he was pretty, that's a liiii.—Pish ; burn your First-Fruits ; again at it. Stella has made twenty false spellings in her writing ; I'll send them to you all back again on the other side of this letter, to mend them ; I won't miss one. Why ; I think there were seventeen bishops' names to the letter Lord Oxford received.—I will send you some pamphlets by Leigh ; put me in mind of it on Monday, for I shall go then to the printer ; yes, and the Miscellany. I am mightily obliged to Walls, but I don't deserve it by any usage of him here, having seen him but twice, and once *en passant*. Mrs. Manley forsworn ombre ! What ; and no blazing star appear ? no monsters born ? no whale thrown up ? have you not found out some evasion for her ? She had no such regard to oaths in her younger days. I got the books for nothing, Madam Dingley ; but the wine I got not ; it was but a promise.—Yes, my head is pretty well in the main, only now and then a little threatening or so.—You talk of my reconciling some great folks. I tell you what. The Secretary told me last night, that he had found the reason why the Queen was cold to



him for some months past ; that a friend had told it him yesterday ; and it was, that they suspected he was at the bottom with the Duke of Marlborough. Then he said, he had reflected upon all I had spoken to him long ago ; but he thought it had only been my suspicion, and my zeal and kindness for him. I said I had reason to take that very ill, to imagine I knew so little of the world as to talk at a venture to a great minister ; that I had gone between him and Lord-Treasurer often, and told each of them what I had said to the other, and that I had informed him so before : he said all that you may imagine to excuse himself, and approve my conduct. I told him I knew all along that this proceeding of mine was the surest way to send me back to my willows in Ireland, but that I regarded it not, provided I could do the kingdom service in keeping them well together. I minded him how often I had told Lord-Treasurer, Lord-Keeper, and him together, that all things depended on their union, and that my comfort was to see them love one another ; and I had told them all singly that I had not said this by chance, &c. He was in a rage to be thus suspected ; swears he will be upon a better foot, or none at all ; and I do not see how they can well want him in this juncture. I hope to find a way of settling this matter. I act an honest part ; that will bring me neither honour nor praise. MD must think the better of me for it : nobody else shall ever know of it. Here's politics enough for once ; but Madam D. D. gave me occasion for it. I think I told you I have got into lodgings that don't smell ill—O Lord ! the spectacles : well, I'll do that on Monday too ; although it goes against me to be employed for folks that neither you nor I care a groat for. Is the eight pounds from Hawkshaw included in the

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thirty-nine pounds five shillings and twopence ? How do I know by this how my account stands ? Can't you write five or six lines to cast it up ? Mine is forty-four pounds *per annum*, and eight pounds from Hawkshaw makes fifty-two pounds. Pray set it right, and let me know ; you had best.—And so now I have answered N. 21, and 'tis late, and I will answer N. 22 in my next : this cannot go to-night, but shall on Tuesday : and so go to your play, and lose your money, with your two eggs a penny ; silly jade ; you witty ? very pretty.

21. Mrs. Van would have me dine with her again to-day, and so I did, though Lady Mountjoy has sent two or three times to have me see and dine with her, and she is a little body I love very well. My head has ached a little in the evenings these three or four days, but it is not of the giddy sort, so I do not much value it. I was to see Lord Harley to-day, but Lord-Treasurer took physic, and I could not see him. He has voided much gravel, and is better, but not well ; he talks of going on Tuesday to see the Queen at Hampton Court ; I wish he may be able. I never saw so fine a summer day as this was : how is it with you pray ? and can't you remember, naughty packs ? I han't seen Lord Pembroke yet. He will be sorry to miss Dilly : I wonder you say nothing of Dilly's being got to Ireland ; if he be not there soon, I shall have some certain odd thoughts : guess them if you can.

22. I dined in the city to-day with Dr. Freind, at one of my printers : I inquired for Leigh, but could not find him : I have forgot what sort of apron you want. I must rout among your letters, a needle in a bottle of hay. I gave Sterne directions, but where to find him Lord knows. I have bespoken the spectacles ; got a set of *Examiners*,

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and five pamphlets, which I have either written or contributed to, except the best, which is the Vindication of the Duke of Marlborough ; and is entirely of the author of the Atlantis. I have settled Dingley's affair with Tooke, who has undertaken it, and understands it. I have bespoken a Miscellany : what would you have me do more ? It cost me a shilling coming home ; it rains terribly, and did so in the morning. Lord-Treasurer has had an ill day, in much pain. He writes and does business in his chamber now he is ill : the man is bewitched : he desires to see me, and I'll maul him, but he will not value it a rush. I am half weary of them all. I often burst out into these thoughts, and will certainly steal away as soon as I decently can. I have many friends, and many enemies ; and the last are more constant in their nature. I have no shuddering at all to think of retiring to my old circumstances, if you can be easy ; but I will always live in Ireland as I did the last time ; I will not hunt for dinners there : nor converse with more than a very few.

23. Morning. This goes to-day, and shall be sealed by and by. Lord-Treasurer takes physic again to-day ; I believe I shall dine with Lord Dupplin. Mr. Tooke brought me a letter directed for me at Morpew's the bookseller. I suppose, by the postage, it came from Ireland ; it is a woman's hand, and seems false spelt on purpose ; it is in such sort of verse as Harris's petition ; rallies me for writing merry things, and not upon divinity ; and is like the subject of the Archbishop's last letter, as I told you. Can you guess whom it came from ? it is not ill written ; pray find it out ; there is a Latin verse at the end of it all rightly spelt ; yet the English, as I think, affectedly wrong in many places. My plaguing time is

coming. A young fellow brought me a letter from Judge Coot, with recommendation to be lieutenant of a man of war. He is the son of one Echlin, who was minister of Belfast before Tisdall, and I have got some other new customers ; but I shall trouble my friends as little as possible. Saucy Stella used to jeer me for meddling with other folks affairs ; but now I am punished for it.—Patrick has brought the candle, and I have no more room. Farewell, &c., &c.

Here is a full and true account of Stella's new spelling.

Plaguely, -	-	-	Plaguily.
Dineing, -	-	-	Dining.
Straingers,	-	-	Strangers.
Chais, -	-	-	Chase.
Waist, -	-	-	Wast.
Houer, -	-	-	Hour.
Immagin,	-	-	Imagine.
A bout, -	-	-	About.
Intellegence,	-	-	Intelligence.
Aboundance,	-	-	Abundance.
Merrit, -	-	-	Merit.
Secreet, -	-	-	Secret.
Phamphlets,	-	-	Pamphlets.
Bussiness,	-	-	Business.

Tell me truly, sirrah, how many of these are mistakes of the pen, and how many are you to answer for as real ill spelling ? There are but fourteen ; I said twenty by guess. You must not be angry, for I will have you spell right, let the world go how it will. Though, after all, there is but a mistake of one letter in any of these words.

I allow you henceforth but six false spellings in every letter you send me.

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LONDON, *Dec. 1, 1711.*

My last was put in this evening. I intended to dine with Mr. Masham to-day, and called at White's chocolate-house to see if he was there. Lord Wharton saw me at the door, and I saw him, but took no notice, and was going away, but he came through the crowd, called after me, and asked me how I did, &c. This was pretty ; and I believe he wished every word he spoke was a halter to hang me. Masham did not dine at home, so I ate with a friend in the neighbourhood. The printer has not sent me the second edition ; I know not the reason, for it certainly came out to-day ; perhaps they are glutted with it already. I found a letter from Lord Harley on my table, to tell me that his father desires I would make two small alterations. I am going to be busy, &c.

2. Morning. See the blunder ; I was making it the 37th day of the month, from the number above. Well, but I am staying here for old Frowde, who appointed to call this morning : I am ready dressed to go to church : I suppose he dare not stir out but on Sundays. The printer called early this morning, told me the second edition went off yesterday in five hours, and he must have a third ready to-morrow, for they might have sold half another : his men are all at work with it, though it be Sunday. This old fool will not come, and I shall miss church. Morrow, sirrahs.—At night. I was at court to-day ; the Queen is well, and walked through part of the rooms. I dined with the Secretary and dispatched

some business. He tells me, the Dutch envoy designs to complain of that pamphlet. The noise it makes is extraordinary. It is fit it should answer the pains I have been at about it. I suppose it will be printed in Ireland. Some lay it to Prior, others to Mr. Secretary St. John, but I am always the first they lay every thing to. I'll go sleep, &c.

3. I have ordered Patrick not to let any odd fellow come up to me ; and a fellow would needs speak with me from Sir George Prettyman. I had never heard of him, and would not see the messenger : but at last it proved that this Sir George has sold his estate, and is a beggar. Smithers, the Farnham carrier, brought me this morning a letter from your mother, with three papers enclosed of Lady Gifford's writing ; one owning some exchequer business of £100 to be Stella's ; another for £100 that she has of yours, which I made over to you for Mariston ; and a third for £300 ; the last is on stamped paper. I think they had better lie in England in some good hand till Lady Gifford dies ; and I will think of some such hand before I come over. I was asking Smithers about all the people of Farnham. Mrs. White has left off dressing, is troubled with lameness and swelled legs, and seldom stirs out ; but her old hang-dog husband as hearty as ever. I was this morning with Lord-Treasurer, about something he would have altered in the pamphlet ; but it can't be till the fourth edition, which I believe will be soon ; for I dined with the printer, and he tells me they have sold off half the third. Mrs. Percival and her daughter have been in town these three weeks, which I never heard till to-day ; and Mrs. Wesley is come to town too, to consult Dr. Radcliffe. The Whigs are resolved to bring that pamphlet into the House of Lords to have it condemned, so I hear.

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But the printer will stand to it, and not own the author ; he must say he had it from the penny-post. Some people talk as if the House of Lords would do some peevish thing ; for the Whigs are now a great majority in it ; our ministers are too negligent of such things : I have never slipped giving them warning ; some of them are sensible of it ; but Lord-Treasurer stands too much upon his own legs. I fancy his good fortune will bear him out in every thing ; but in reason I should think this ministry to stand very unsteady ; if they can carry a peace, they may hold ; I believe not else.

4. Mr. Secretary sent to me to-day to dine with him alone ; but we had two more with us, which hindered me doing some business. I was this morning with young Harcourt, secretary to our Society, to take a room for our weekly meetings ; and the fellow asked us five guineas a-week only to have leave to dine once a-week ; was not that pretty ? so we broke off with him, and are to dine next Thursday at Harcourt's, (he is Lord-Keeper's son). They have sold off above half the third edition, and answers are coming out : the Dutch envoy refused dining with Dr. Davenant, because he was suspected to write it : I have made some alterations in every edition, and it has cost me more trouble, for the time, since the printing, than before. 'Tis sent over to Ireland, and I suppose you will have it reprinted.

5. They are now printing the fourth edition, which is reckoned very extraordinary, considering 'tis a dear twelvepenny book, and not bought up in numbers by the party to give away, as the Whigs do, but purely upon its own strength. I have got an under spur-leather to write an *Examiner* again, and the Secretary and I will now and

then send hints ; but we would have it a little upon the Grub Street, to be a match for their writers. I dined with Lord-Treasurer to-day at five : he dined by himself after his family, and drinks no claret yet, for fear of his rheumatism, of which he is almost well. He was very pleasant, as he is always : yet I fancied he was a little touched with the present posture of affairs. The Elector of Hanover's minister here has given in a violent memorial against the peace, and caused it to be printed. The Whig lords are doing their utmost for a majority against Friday, and design, if they can, to address the Queen against the peace. Lord Nottingham, a famous Tory and speech-maker, is gone over to the Whig side : they toast him daily, and Lord Wharton says, It is Dismal (so they call him from his looks) will save England at last. Lord-Treasurer was hinting as if he wished a ballad was made on him, and I will get up one against to-morrow. He gave me a scurrilous printed paper of bad verses on himself, under the name of the English Catiline, and made me read them to the company. It was his birth-day, which he would not tell us, but Lord Harley whispered it to me.

6. I was this morning making the ballad, two degrees above Grub Street ; at noon I paid a visit to Mrs. Masham, and then went to dine with our Society. Poor Lord-Keeper dined below stairs, I suppose, on a bit of mutton. We chose two members ; we were eleven met, the greatest meeting we ever had : I am next week to introduce Lord Orrery. The printer came before we parted, and brought the ballad, which made them laugh very heartily a dozen times. He is going to print the pamphlet in small, a fifth edition, to be taken off by friends, and sent into the country. A sixpenny answer is come out, good for



nothing, but guessing me, among others, for the author. To-morrow is the fatal day for the Parliament meeting, and we are full of hopes and fears. We reckon we have a majority of ten on our side in the House of Lords ; yet I observed Mrs. Masham a little uneasy ; she assures me the Queen is stout. The Duke of Marlborough has not seen the Queen for some days past ; Mrs. Masham is glad of it, because she says he tells a hundred lies to his friends of what she says to him : he is one day humble, and the next day on the high ropes. The Duke of Ormond, they say, will be in town to-night by twelve.

7. This being the day the Parliament was to meet, and the great question to be determined, I went with Dr. Freind to dine in the city, on purpose to be out of the way, and we sent our printer to see what was our fate ; but he gave us a most melancholy account of things. The Earl of Nottingham began, and spoke against a peace, and desired that in their address they might put in a clause to advise the Queen not to make a peace without Spain ; which was debated, and carried by the Whigs by about six voices : and this has happened entirely by my Lord-Treasurer's neglect, who did not take timely care to make up all his strength, although every one of us gave him caution enough. Nottingham has certainly been bribed. The question is yet only carried in the committee of the whole House, and we hope when it is reported to the House to-morrow, we shall have a majority, by some Scotch lords coming to town. However, it is a mighty blow and loss of reputation to Lord-Treasurer, and may end in his ruin. I hear the thing only as the printer brought it, who was at the debate ; but how the ministry take it, or what their hopes and fears are, I cannot tell

until I see them. I shall be early with the Secretary to-morrow, and then I will tell you more, and shall write a full account to the Bishop of Clogher to-morrow, and to the Archbishop of Dublin, if I have time. I am horribly down at present. I long to know how Lord-Treasurer bears this, and what remedy he has. The Duke of Ormond came this day to town, and was there.

8. I was early this morning with the Secretary, and talked over this matter. He hoped, that, when it was reported this day in the House of Lords, they would disagree with their committee, and so the matter would go off, only with a little loss of reputation to the Lord-Treasurer. I dined with Mr. Cockburn, and after, a Scotch member came in, and told us that the clause was carried against the court in the House of Lords almost two to one. I went immediately to Mrs. Masham, and meeting Dr. Arbuthnot (the Queen's favourite physician), we went together. She was just come from waiting at the Queen's dinner, and going to her own. She had heard nothing of the thing being gone against us. It seems Lord-Treasurer had been so negligent, that he was with the Queen while the question was put in the House : I immediately told Mrs. Masham, that either she and Lord-Treasurer had joined with the Queen to betray us, or that they two were betrayed by the Queen : she protested solemnly it was not the former, and I believed her ; but she gave me some lights to suspect the Queen is changed. For, yesterday when the Queen was going from the House, where she sat to hear the debate, the Duke of Shrewsbury, Lord-Chamberlain, asked her whether he or the Great Chamberlain Lindsay ought to lead her out ; she answered short, Neither of you, and gave her hand to the Duke of Somer-

set, who was louder than any in the House for the clause against peace. She gave me one or two more instances of this sort, which convince me that the Queen is false, or at least very much wavering. Mr. Masham begged us to stay, because Lord-Treasurer would call, and we were resolved to fall on him about his negligence in securing a majority. He came, and appeared in good humour as usual, but I thought his countenance was much cast down. I rallied him, and desired him to give me his staff, which he did ; I told him, if he would secure it me a week, I would set all right : he asked, how ? I said, I would immediately turn Lord Marlborough, his two daughters, the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, and Lord Cholmondely, out of all their employments ; and I believe he had not a friend but was of my opinion. Arbuthnot asked, how he came not to secure a majority ? He could answer nothing, but that he could not help it, if people would lie and forswear. A poor answer for a great minister. There fell from him a Scripture expression, that the *hearts of kings are unsearchable*. I told him, it was what I feared, and was from him the worst news he could tell me. I begged him to know what he had to trust to : he stuck a little ; but at last bid me not fear, for all would be well yet. We would fain have had him eat a bit where he was, but he would go home, it was past six : he made me go home with him. There we found his brother and Mr. Secretary. He made his son take a list of all in the House of Commons who had places, and yet voted against the court, in such a manner as if they should lose their places : I doubt he is not able to compass it. Lord-Keeper came in an hour, and they were going upon business. So I left him, and returned to Mrs. Masham ; but she had com-

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pany with her, and I would not stay.—This is a long journal, and of a day that may produce great alterations, and hazard the ruin of England. The Whigs are all in triumph ; they foretold how all this would be, but we thought it boasting. Nay, they said the Parliament should be dissolved before Christmas, and perhaps it may : this is all your Duchess of Somerset's doings. I warned them of it nine months ago, and a hundred times since : the Secretary always dreaded it. I told Lord-Treasurer, I should have the advantage of him ; for he would lose his head, and I should only be hanged, and so carry my body entire to the grave.

9. I was this morning with Mr. Secretary ; we are both of opinion that the Queen is false. I told him what I heard, and he confirmed it by other circumstances. I then went to my friend Lewis, who had sent to see me. He talks of nothing but retiring to his estates in Wales. He gave me reasons to believe the whole matter is settled between the Queen and the Whigs ; he hears that Lord Somers is to be Treasurer, and believes, that sooner than turn out the Duchess of Somerset, she will dissolve the Parliament, and get a Whiggish one, which may be done by managing elections. Things are now in the crisis, and a day or two will determine. I have desired him to engage Lord-Treasurer, that as soon as he finds the change is resolved on, he will send me abroad as Queen's secretary somewhere or other, where I may remain till the new ministers recal me ; and then I will be sick for five or six months till the storm has spent itself. I hope he will grant me this ; for I should hardly trust myself to the mercy of my enemies while their anger is fresh. I dined to-day with the Secretary, who affects mirth, and seems to hope

all will yet be well. I took him aside after dinner, told him how I had served them, and had asked no reward, but thought I might ask security ; and then desired the same thing of him, to send me abroad before a change. He embraced me, and swore he would take the same care of me as himself, &c., but bid me have courage, for, that in two days my Lord-Treasurer's wisdom would appear greater than ever ; that he suffered all that had happened on purpose, and had taken measures to turn it to advantage. I said, God send it ; but I do not believe a syllable ; and, as far as I can judge, the game is lost. I shall know more soon, and my letters will at least be a good history to show you the steps of this change.

10. I was this morning with Lewis, who thinks they will let the Parliament sit till they have given the money, and then dissolve them in spring, and break the ministry. He spoke to Lord-Treasurer about what I desired him. My lord desired him with great earnestness to assure me, that all would be well, and that I should fear nothing. I dined in the city with a friend. This day the Commons went to the Queen with their address, and all the lords who were for the peace went with them, to show their zeal. I have now some farther conviction that the Queen is false, and it begins to be known.

11. I went between two and three to see Mrs. Masham ; while I was there she went to her bed-chamber to try a petticoat. Lord-Treasurer came in to see her, and seeing me in the outer-room, fell a-rallying me : says he, you had better keep company with me, than with such a fellow as Lewis, who has not the soul of a chicken, nor the heart of a mite. Then he went in to Mrs. Masham, and as he came back desired her leave to let me go home with him to

dinner. He asked, whether I was not afraid to be seen with him. I said, I never valued my Lord-Treasurer in my life, and therefore should have always the same esteem for Mr. Harley and Lord Oxford. He seemed to talk confidently, as if he reckoned that all this would turn to advantage. I could not forbear hinting, that he was not sure of the Queen ; and that those scoundrel, starving lords would never have dared to vote against the court, if Somerset had not assured them, that it would please the Queen. He said, that was true, and Somerset did so. I staid till six ; then De Buys, the Dutch envoy, came to him, and I left him. Prior was with us a while after dinner. I see him and all of them cast down ; though they make the best of it.

12. Ford is come to town ; I saw him last night ; he is in no fear, but sanguine, although I have told him the state of things. This change so resembles the last, that I wonder they do not observe it. The Secretary sent for me yesterday to dine with him, but I was abroad ; I hope he had something to say to me. This is morning, and I write in bed. I am going to the Duke of Ormond, whom I have not yet seen. Morrow, sirrahs.—At night. I was to see the Duke of Ormond this morning : he asked me two or three questions after his civil way, and they related to Ireland : at last I told him, that, from the time I had seen him, I never once thought of Irish affairs. He whispered me, that he hoped I had done some good things here : I said, if every body else had done half as much, we should not be as we are : then we went aside, and talked over affairs. I told him how all things stood, and advised him what was to be done. I then went and sat an hour with the Duchess ; then as long with Lady Oglethorp,

who is so cunning a devil, that I believe she could yet find a remedy, if they would take her advice. I dined with a friend at court.

13. I was this morning with the Secretary : he will needs pretend to talk as if things would be well ; will you believe it, said he, if you see these people turned out? I said, yes, if I saw the Duke and Duchess of Somerset out : he swore, if they were not, he would give up his place. Our Society dined to-day at Sir William Wyndham's ; we were thirteen present. Lord Orrery and two other members were introduced ; I left them at seven. I forgot to tell you, that the printer told me yesterday, that Morphew, the publisher, was sent for by that Lord Chief Justice, who was a manager against Sacheverell ; he showed him two or three papers and pamphlets ; among the rest mine of the *Conduct of the Allies*, threatened him, asked who was the author, and has bound him over to appear next term. He would not have the impudence to do this, if he did not foresee what was coming at court.

14. Lord Shelburn was with me this morning, to be informed of the state of affairs, and desired I would answer all his objections, against a peace, which was soon done, for he would not give me room to put in a word. He is a man of good sense enough ; but argues so violently, that he will some day or other put himself into a consumption. He desires that he may not be denied when he comes to see me, which I promised, but will not perform. Leigh and Sterne set out for Ireland on Monday se'nnight : I suppose they will be with you long before this.—I was to-night drinking very good wine in scurvy company, at least some of them ; I was

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drawn in, but will be more cautious for the future ; 'tis late, &c.

15. Morning. They say the Occasional Bill is brought to-day into the House of Lords ; but I know not. I will now put an end to my letter, and give it into the post-house myself. This will be a memorable letter, and I shall sigh to see it some years hence. Here are the first steps toward the ruin of an excellent ministry ; for I look upon them as certainly ruined ; and God knows what may be the consequences.—I now bid my dearest MD farewell ; for company is coming, and I must be at Lord Dartmouth's office by noon. Farewell, dearest MD ; I wish you a merry Christmas ; I believe you will have this about that time. Love Presto, who loves MD above all things a thousand times. Farewell again, dearest MD, &c.



## THE CONDUCT OF THE ALLIES

(1711)

*The Conduct of the Allies* was Swift's greatest political pamphlet and had the most momentous results. It was undertaken on behalf of the Oxford administration which was staking all on the overthrow of Marlborough and the establishing of Peace. The theme was by no means popular at the time, but Swift by astute advocacy and dialectical cunning saved the Ministry, and for the time being, restored public confidence. It was composed whilst Swift was staying at Windsor, and Bolingbroke in nightly discussions supplied Swift with many of the necessary facts. Its effect was electrical. Dr. Johnson wrote of it: 'The people who had been amused with bonfires and triumphal processions, and looked with idolatry on the general and his friends, who, as they thought, had made England the arbitress of nations, were confounded between shame and rage when they found that mines had been exhausted and millions destroyed to secure the Dutch or aggrandize the emperor, without any advantage to ourselves; that we had been bribing our neighbours to fight their own quarrel; and that amongst our enemies we might number our allies.'

Eleven thousand copies of the work were sold in two months. On December 30 the Duke of Marlborough was dismissed, and the following day a Tory majority was secured in the House of Lords by the creation of twelve new peers. The progress of the pamphlet may be read in the *Journal to Stella*. Swift was only stating the truth when he wrote, 'All agree that it was my book that spirited them (the House of Commons) to these resolutions.' Nowadays its casuistry is obvious, but its lucidity of style and eloquence of argument will ensure it a high place in political literature for all time.

## THE PREFACE

I cannot sufficiently admire the industry of a sort of men, wholly out of favour with the prince and people, and openly professing a separate interest from the bulk of the landed men, who yet are able to raise, at this juncture, so great a clamour against a peace, without offering one single reason, but what we find in their ballads. I lay it

down for a maxim, that no reasonable person, whether Whig or Tory (since it is necessary to use those foolish terms) can be of opinion for continuing the war, upon the foot it now is, unless he be a gainer by it, or hopes it may occasion some new turn of affairs at home, to the advantage of his party; or lastly, unless he be very ignorant of the kingdom's condition, and by what means we have been reduced to it. Upon the two first cases, where interest is concerned, I have nothing to say: but as to the last, I think it highly necessary, that the public should be freely and impartially told what circumstances they are in, after what manner they have been treated by those whom they trusted so many years with the disposal of their blood and treasure, and what the consequences of this management are like to be upon themselves and their posterity.

Those who, either by writing or discourse, have undertaken to defend the proceedings of the late ministry, in the management of the war, and of the treaty at Gertruydenburg, have spent time in celebrating the conduct and valour of our leaders and their troops, in summing up the victories they have gained, and the towns they have taken. Then they tell us what high articles were insisted on by our ministers and those of the confederates, and what pains both were at in persuading France to accept them. But nothing of this can give the least satisfaction to the just complaints of the kingdom. As to the war, our grievances are, that a greater load has been laid on us than was either just or necessary, or than we have been able to bear; that the grossest impositions have been submitted to for the advancement of private wealth and power, or in order to forward the more dangerous designs of a

faction, to both which a peace would have put an end ; and that the part of the war which was chiefly our province, which would have been most beneficial to us, and destructive to the enemy, was wholly neglected. As to a peace, we complain of being deluded by a Mock Treaty ; in which those who negociated, took care to make such demands, as they knew were impossible to be complied with, and therefore might securely press every article as if they were in earnest.

These are some of the points I design to treat of in the following discourse ; with several others which I thought it necessary, at this time, for the kingdom to be informed of. I think I am not mistaken in those facts I mention ; at least not in any circumstance so material, as to weaken the consequences I draw from them.

After ten years war with perpetual success, to tell us it is yet impossible to have a good peace, is very surprising, and seems so different from what hath ever happened in the world before, that a man of any party may be allowed suspecting, we have either been ill used, or have not made the most of our victories, and might therefore desire to know where the difficulty lay : then it is natural to enquire into our present condition ; how long we shall be able to go on at this rate ; what the consequences may be upon the present and future ages ; and whether a peace, without that impracticable point which some people do so much insist on, be really ruinous in itself, or equally so with the continuance of the war.

But if all this be true : if, according to what I have affirmed, we began this war contrary to reason : if, as the other party themselves, upon all occasions, acknowledge, the success we have had was more than we could reason-

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ably expect : if, after all our success, we have not made that use of it, which in reason we ought to have done : if we have made weak and foolish bargains with our allies, suffered them tamely to break every article, even in those bargains to our disadvantage, and allowed them to treat us with insolence and contempt, at the very instant when we were gaining towns, provinces and kingdoms for them, at the price of our ruin, and without any prospect of interest to our selves : If we have consumed all our strength in attacking the enemy on the strongest side, where (as the old Duke of Schomberg expressed it) to engage with France, was to take a bull by the horns ; and left wholly unattempted, that part of the war, which could only enable us to continue or to end it : if all this, I say, be our case, it is a very obvious question to ask, by what motives, or what management, we are thus become the dupes and bubbles of Europe ? Sure it cannot be owing to the stupidity arising from the coldness of our climate, since those among our allies, who have given us most reason to complain, are as far removed from the sun as our selves.

If in laying open the real causes of our present misery, I am forced to speak with some freedom, I think it will require no apology ; reputation is the smallest sacrifice those can make us, who have been the instruments of our ruin ; because it is that, for which in all probability they have the least value. So that in exposing the actions of such persons, I cannot be said, properly speaking, to do them an injury. But as it will be some satisfaction to the people, to know by whom they have been so long abused ; so it may be of great use to us and our posterity, not to trust the safety of their country in the

hands of those who act by such principles, and from such motives.

I have already observed, that when the counsels of this war were debated in the late King's time, a certain great man was then so averse from entering into it, that he rather chose to give up his employment, and tell the king he could serve him no longer. Upon that Prince's death, although the grounds of our quarrel with France had received no manner of addition, yet this lord thought fit to alter his sentiments ; for the scene was quite changed ; his Lordship and the family with whom he was engaged by so complicated an alliance, were in the highest credit possible with the Queen : the Treasurer's staff was ready for his Lordship, the Duke was to command the army, and the Duchess, by her employments, and the favour she was possessed of, to be always nearest her Majesty's person ; by which the whole power, at home and abroad, would be devolved upon that family. This was a prospect so very inviting, that, to confess the truth, it could not be easily withstood by any who have so keen an appetite for wealth or ambition. By an agreement subsequent to the Grand Alliance, we were to assist the Dutch with forty thousand men, all to be commanded by the Duke of Marlborough. So that whether this war were prudently begun or not, it is plain, that the true spring or motive of it, was the aggrandizing a particular family ; and in short, a war of the General and the Ministry, and not of the Prince or people ; since those very persons were against it when they knew the power, and consequently the profit, would be in other hands.

With these measures fell in all that set of people, who are called the monied men ; such as had raised vast sums

by trading with stocks and funds, and lending upon great interest and premiums ; whose perpetual harvest is war, and whose beneficial way of traffic must very much decline by a peace.

In that whole chain of encroachments made upon us by the Dutch, which I have above deduced, and under those several gross impositions from other powers, if any one should ask why our General continued so easy to the last ? I know no other way so probable, or indeed so charitable to account for it, as by that unmeasurable love of wealth, which his best friends allow to be his predominant passion. However, I shall waive any thing that is personal upon this subject. I shall say nothing of those great presents made by several princes, which the soldiers used to call winter foraging, and said it was better than that of the summer ; of two and an half per cent. subtracted out of all the subsidies we pay in those parts, which amounts to no inconsiderable sum ; and lastly, of the grand perquisites in a long successful war, which are so amicably adjusted between him and the States.

But when the war was thus begun, there soon fell in other incidents here at home, which made the continuance of it necessary for those who were the chief advisers. The Whigs were at that time out of all credit or consideration : the reigning favourites had always carried what was called the Tory principle, at least as high, as our constitution could bear ; and most others in great employments, were wholly in the Church-interest. These last, among whom several were persons of the greatest merit, quality and consequence, were not able to endure the many instances of pride, insolence, avarice and ambition, which those favourites began so early to discover, nor to

see them presuming to be the sole dispensers of the Royal favour. However, their opposition was to no purpose; they wrestled with too great a power, and were soon crushed under it. For, those in possession finding they could never be quiet in their usurpations, while others had any credit, who were at least upon an equal foot of merit, began to make overtures to the discarded Whigs, who would be content with any terms of accommodation. Thus commenced this Solemn League and Covenant, which hath ever since been cultivated with so much application. The great traders in money were wholly devoted to the Whigs, who had first raised them. The army, the court, and the treasury, continued under the old despotic administration: the Whigs were received into employment, left to manage the Parliament, cry down the landed interest, and worry the church. Mean time our allies, who were not ignorant that all this artificial structure had no true foundation in the hearts of the people, resolved to make their best use of it, as long as it should last. And the General's credit being raised to a great height at home, by our success in Flanders, the Dutch began their gradual impositions, lessening their quotas, breaking their stipulations, garrisoning the towns we took for them, without supplying their troops; with many other infringements: all which we were forced to submit to, because the General was made easy; because the monied men at home were fond of the war; because the Whigs were not yet firmly settled; and because that exorbitant degree of power, which was built upon a supposed necessity of employing particular persons, would go off in a peace. It is needless to add, that the Emperor, and other Princes, followed the example

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of the Dutch, and succeeded as well, for the same reasons.

I have here imputed the continuance of the war to the mutual indulgence between our General and allies, wherein they both so well found their accounts ; to the fears of the money-changers, lest their tables should be overthrown ; to the designs of the Whigs, who apprehended the loss of their credit and employments in a peace ; and to those at home, who held their immoderate engrossments of power and favour, by no other tenure than their own presumption upon the necessity of affairs. The truth of this will appear indisputable, by considering with what unanimity and concert these several parties acted towards that great end.

When the vote passed in the House of Lords, against any peace without Spain being restored to the Austrian family, the Earl of Wharton told the House, that indeed it was impossible and impracticable to recover Spain ; but however, there were certain reasons why such a vote should be made at that time ; which reasons wanted no explanation : for the General and the Ministry having refused to accept very advantageous offers of a peace, after the Battle of Ramellies, were forced to take in a set of men, with a previous bargain, to screen them from the consequences of that miscarriage. And accordingly upon the first succeeding opportunity, which was that of the Prince of Denmark's death, the chief leaders of the party were brought into several great employments.

So when the Queen was no longer able to bear the tyranny and insolence of those ungrateful servants, who as they waxed the fatter, did but kick the more ; our two great allies abroad, and our stock-jobbers at home,



took immediately the alarm ; applied the nearest way to the throne, by memorials and messages, jointly directing her Majesty not to change her Secretary or Treasurer ; who for the true reasons that these officious intermeddlers demanded their continuance, ought never to have been admitted into the least degree of trust ; since what they did was nothing less than betraying the interest of their native country, to those princes, who in their turns were to do what they could to support them in power at home.

Thus it plainly appears, that there was a conspiracy on all sides to go on with those measures, which must perpetuate the war ; and a conspiracy founded upon the interest and ambition of each party ; which begat so firm a union, that instead of wondering why it lasted so long, I am astonished to think how it came to be broken. The prudence, courage, and firmness of her Majesty in all the steps of that great change, would, if the particulars were truly related, make a very shining part in her story : nor is her judgment less to be admired, which directed her in the choice of perhaps the only persons who had skill, credit, and resolution enough to be her instruments in overthrowing so many difficulties.

Some would pretend to lessen the merit of this, by telling us, that the rudeness, the tyranny, the oppression, the ingratitude of the late favourites towards their mistress, were no longer to be borne. They produce instances to show, how her Majesty was pursued through all her retreats, particularly at Windsor ; where, after the enemy had possessed themselves of every inch of ground, they at last attacked and stormed the castle, forcing the Queen to fly to an adjoining cottage, pursuant

to the advice of Solomon, who tells us, It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. They would have it, that such continued ill usage was enough to enflame the meekest spirit : they blame the favourites in point of policy, and think it nothing extraordinary, that the Queen should be at an end of her patience, and resolve to discard them. But I am of another opinion, and think their proceedings were right. For nothing is so apt to break even the bravest spirits, as a continual chain of oppressions : one injury is best defended by a second, and this by a third. By these steps, the old masters of the palace in France became masters of the kingdom ; and by these steps, a General during pleasure, might have grown into a General for life, and a General for life into a King. So that I still insist upon it as a wonder, how her Majesty, thus besieged on all sides, was able to extricate herself.

## THE DRAPIER'S LETTERS

(1723-4)

THESE letters are part of the campaign waged by Swift on behalf of the Irish people, and they are his most characteristic contribution to the cause. Whilst he recognised, and proclaimed without equivocation, like Spenser more than a century earlier, the wildness and degradation of the greater part of Irish society, he was alive to many of the injustices under which they laboured, and determined to redress their wrongs, as far as their political and commercial connections with England were concerned, to the utmost of his power. *The Drapier's Letters* were called out by what Swift considered was a further attack on the independence of Ireland. In 1722 a patent was granted to a certain Englishman, William Wood, to coin copper currency to the value of £108,000, a figure grossly above the needs of the country. There was more than a suspicion of jobbery about the whole transaction, and, in any case, the Irish Government was never consulted in the matter. Swift at once put forward the Irish point of view in the form of a letter written in the character of M. B. Drapier. This was followed by other letters, and after the publication of the fourth, a proclamation was issued, and the printer was put into prison. Swift, not to be beaten, wrote more letters, and finally the patent to Wood was withdrawn. Swift became the hero of the Irish. 'At every street corner broad-sheets and ballads in his honour were sold. Every tavern had its club to celebrate the Drapier, and every convivial meeting rang with choruses in his honour. . . . As the controversy was closing for Swift, new pamphlets from his imitators continued to come forth. The description of the supposed execution of Wood was given, with his dying speech upon the scaffold. Dreary jokes were played upon his name, and the street cries on the subject were repeated in pamphlets to suit the taste of the day.' (*Craik*.)

The arguments in these letters are often false, and there are often errors of fact, but the pamphlets show Swift at his best as a special pleader. The simplicity and downright earnestness of the style make them very effective controversial weapons. The satirist keeps in the background. It is an appeal to common-sense with just sufficient banter to please and just sufficient railery to amuse.

## THE DRAPIER'S LETTERS

## LETTER I

BRETHREN, FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN, AND FELLOW-SUBJECTS,—What I intend now to say to you, is, next to your duty to God, and the care of your salvation, of the greatest concern to yourselves and your children ; your bread and clothing, and every common necessary of life, entirely depend upon it. Therefore I do most earnestly exhort you, as men, as Christians, as parents, and as lovers of your country, to read this paper with the utmost attention, or get it read to you by others ; which that you may do at the less expense, I have ordered the printer to sell it at the lowest rate.

It is a great fault among you, that when a person writes with no other intention than to do you good, you will not be at the pains to read his advices. One copy of this paper may serve a dozen of you, which will be less than a farthing a-piece. It is your folly, that you have no common or general interest in your view, not even the wisest among you ; neither do you know, or inquire, or care, who are your friends, or who are your enemies.

About four years ago a little book was written, to advise all people to wear the manufactures of this our own dear country. It had no other design, said nothing against the King or Parliament, or any person whatsoever ; yet the poor printer was prosecuted two years with the utmost violence, and even some weavers themselves (for whose sake it was written) being upon the JURY, found him guilty. This would be enough to discourage any man from endeavouring to do you good, when you will either

neglect him, or fly in his face for his pains, and when he must expect only danger to himself, and to be fined and imprisoned, perhaps to his ruin.

However, I cannot but warn you once more of the manifest destruction before your eyes, if you do not behave yourselves as you ought.

I will therefore first tell you the plain story of the fact ; and then I will lay before you how you ought to act, in common prudence, according to the laws of your country.

The fact is this : It having been many years since COPPER HALFPENCE OR FARTHINGs were last coined in this kingdom, they have been for some time very scarce, and many counterfeits passed about under the name of *raps*, several applications were made to England, that we might have liberty to coin new ones, as in former times we did ; but they did not succeed. At last, one Mr. Wood, a mean ordinary man, a hardware dealer, procured a patent under his Majesty's broad seal to coin 108,000*l.* in copper for this kingdom ; which patent, however, did not oblige any one here to take them, unless they pleased. Now you must know, that the halfpence and farthings in England pass for very little more than they are worth ; and if you should beat them to pieces, and sell them to the brasier, you would not lose much above a penny in a shilling. But Mr. Wood made his halfpence of such base metal, and so much smaller than the English ones, that the brasier would not give you above a penny of good money for a shilling of his ; so that this sum of 108,000*l.* in good gold and silver, must be given for trash, that will not be worth eight or nine thousand pounds real value. But this is not the worst ; for Mr. Wood, when he pleases, may, by

stealth, send over another 108,000*l.*, and buy all our goods for eleven parts in twelve under the value. For example, if a hatter sells a dozen of hats for five shillings a-piece, which amounts to three pounds, and receives the payment in Wood's coin, he really receives only the value of five shillings.

Perhaps you will wonder how such an ordinary fellow as this Mr. Wood could have so much interest as to get his Majesty's broad seal for so great a sum of bad money to be sent to this poor country ; and that all the nobility and gentry here could not obtain the same favour, and let us make our own halfpence, as we used to do. Now I will make that matter very plain : We are at a great distance from the King's court, and have nobody there to solicit for us, although a great number of lords and 'squires, whose estates are here, and are our countrymen, spend all their lives and fortunes there ; but this same Mr. Wood was able to attend constantly for his own interest ; he is an Englishman, and had great friends ; and, it seems, knew very well where to give money to those that would speak to others, that could speak to the King, and would tell a fair story. And his Majesty, and perhaps the great lord or lords who advise him, might think it was for our country's good ; and so, as the lawyers express it, ' the King was deceived in his grant,' which often happens in all reigns. And I am sure if his Majesty knew that such a patent, if it should take effect according to the desire of Mr. Wood, would utterly ruin this kingdom, which has given such great proofs of its loyalty, he would immediately recal it, and perhaps show his displeasure to somebody or other ; but a word to the wise is enough. Most of you must have heard with what anger our

honourable House of Commons received an account of this Wood's patent. There were several fine speeches made upon it, and plain proofs, that it was all a wicked cheat from the bottom to the top ; and several smart votes were printed, which that same Wood had the assurance to answer likewise in print ; and in so confident a way, as if he were a better man than our whole Parliament put together.

This Wood, as soon as his patent was passed, or soon after, sends over a great many barrels of those halfpence to Cork, and other sea-port towns ; and to get them off, offered a hundred pounds in his coin, for seventy or eighty in silver ; but the collectors of the King's customs very honestly refused to take them, and so did almost everybody else. And since the Parliament has condemned them, and desired the King that they might be stopped, all the kingdom do abominate them.

But Wood is still working underhand to force his halfpence upon us ; and if he can, by the help of his friends in England, prevail so far as to get an order, that the commissioners and collectors of the King's money shall receive them, and that the army is to be paid with them, then he thinks his work shall be done. And this is the difficulty you will be under in such a case ; for the common soldier, when he goes to the market, or alehouse, will offer this money ; and if it be refused, perhaps he will swagger and hector, and threaten to beat the butcher or alewife, or take the goods by force, and throw them the bad halfpence. In this and the like cases, the shopkeeper or victualler, or any other tradesman, has no more to do, than to demand ten times the price of his goods, if it is to be paid in Wood's money ; for example, twenty-pence of that money for a

quart of ale and so in all things else, and not part with his goods till he gets the money.

For, suppose you go to an alehouse with that base money, and the landlord gives you a quart for four of those halfpence, what must the victualler do ? his brewer will not be paid in that coin ; or, if the brewer should be such a fool, the farmers will not take it from them for their bere, because they are bound, by their leases, to pay their rent in good and lawful money of England ; which this is not, nor of Ireland neither ; and the 'squire, their landlord, will never be so bewitched to take such trash for his land ; so that it must certainly stop somewhere or other ; and wherever it stops, it is the same thing, and we are all undone.

The common weight of these halfpence is between four and five to an ounce—suppose five ; then three shillings and fourpence will weigh a pound, and consequently twenty shillings will weigh six pounds butter weight. Now there are many hundred farmers, who pay two hundred pounds a-year rent ; therefore, when one of these farmers comes with his half-year's rent, which is one hundred pounds, it will be at least six hundred pounds weight, which is three horses' load.

If a 'squire has a mind to come to town to buy clothes, and wine, and spices for himself and family, or perhaps to pass the winter here, he must bring with him five or six horses well loaden with sacks, as the farmers bring their corn ; and when his lady comes in her coach to our shops, it must be followed by a car loaded with Mr. Wood's money. And I hope we shall have the grace to take it for no more than it is worth.

They say 'Squire Conolly has sixteen thousand pounds



a-year ; now, if he sends for his rent to town, as it is likely he does, he must have two hundred and fifty horses to bring up his half-year's rent, and two or three great cellars in his house for stowage. But what the bankers will do, I cannot tell ; for I am assured, that some great bankers keep by them forty thousand pounds in ready cash, to answer all payments ; which sum, in Mr. Wood's money, would require twelve hundred horses to carry it.

For my own part, I am already resolved what to do : I have a pretty good shop of Irish stuffs and silks ; and instead of taking Mr. Wood's bad copper, I intend to truck with my neighbours the butchers and bakers and brewers, and the rest, goods for goods ; and the little gold and silver I have, I will keep by me, like my heart's blood, till better times, or until I am just ready to starve ; and then I will buy Mr. Wood's money, as my father did the brass money in King James's time, who could buy ten pounds of it with a guinea ; and I hope to get as much for a pistole, and so purchase bread from those who will be such fools as to sell it me.

These halfpence, if they once pass, will soon be counterfeited, because it may be cheaply done, the stuff is so base. The Dutch likewise will probably do the same thing, and send them over to us to pay for our goods ; and Mr. Wood will never be at rest, but coin on : so that in some years we shall have at least five times 108,000*l.* of this lumber. Now the current money of this kingdom is not reckoned to be above four hundred thousand pounds in all ; and while there is a silver sixpence left, these blood-suckers will never be quiet.

When once the kingdom is reduced to such a condition, I will tell you what must be the end : the gentlemen of

estates will all turn off their tenants for want of payments, because, as I told you before, the tenants are obliged by their leases to pay sterling, which is lawful current money of England ; then they will turn their own farmers, as too many of them do already, run all into sheep, where they can, keeping only such other cattle as are necessary ; then they will be their own merchants, and send their wool, and butter, and hides, and linen, beyond sea, for ready money, and wine, and spices, and silks. They will keep only a few miserable cottagers : the farmers must rob, or beg, or leave their country ; the shopkeepers in this, and every other town, must break and starve ; for it is the landed man that maintains the merchant, the shopkeeper, and handicraftsman.

But when the 'squire turns farmer and merchant himself, all the good money he gets from abroad, he will hoard up to send for England, and keep some poor tailor or weaver, and the like, in his own house, who will be glad to get bread at any rate.

I should never have done, if I were to tell you all the miseries that we shall undergo, if we be so foolish and wicked as to take this cursed coin. It would be very hard, if all Ireland should be put into one scale, and this sorry fellow Wood into the other ; that Mr. Wood should weigh down this whole kingdom, by which England gets above a million of good money every year clear into their pockets : and that is more than the English do by all the world besides.

But your great comfort is, that as his Majesty's patent does not oblige you to take this money, so the laws have not given the crown a power of forcing the subject to take what money the King pleases ; for then, by the same

reason, we might be bound to take pebble-stones, or cockle-shells, or stamped leather, for current coin, if ever we should happen to live under an ill prince ; who might likewise, by the same power, make a guinea pass for ten pounds, a shilling for twenty shillings, and so on ; by which he would, in a short time, get all the silver and gold of the kingdom into his own hands, and leave us nothing but brass or leather, or what he pleased. Neither is anything reckoned more cruel and oppressive in the French government, than their common practice of calling in all their money, after they have sunk it very low, and then coining it anew at a much higher value ; which, however, is not the thousandth part so wicked as this abominable project of Mr. Wood. For, the French give their subjects silver for silver, and gold for gold ; but this fellow will not so much as give us good brass or copper for our gold and silver, nor even a twelfth part of their worth.

Having said thus much, I will now go on to tell you the judgment of some great lawyers in this matter, whom I fee'd on purpose for your sakes, and got their opinions under their hands, that I might be sure I went upon good grounds.

A famous law-book, called *The Mirror of Justice*, discoursing of the charters (or laws) ordained by our ancient kings, declares the law to be as follows : ' It was ordained that no king of this realm should change or impair the money, or make any other money than of gold or silver, without the assent of all the counties ; ' that is, as my Lord Coke says, without the assent of Parliament.

This book is very ancient, and of great authority for the time in which it was written, and with that character is

often quoted by that great lawyer my Lord Coke. By the law of England, the several metals are divided into lawful or true metal, and unlawful or false metal ; the former comprehends silver and gold, the latter all baser metals. That the former is only to pass in payments, appears by an act of Parliament made the twentieth year of Edward the First, called the statute concerning the passing of pence ; which I give you here as I got it translated into English ; for some of our laws at that time were, as I am told, written in Latin : ‘ Whoever, in buying or selling, presumes to refuse a halfpenny or farthing of lawful money, bearing the stamp which it ought to have, let him be seized on as a contemner of the King’s majesty, and cast into prison.’

By this statute, no person is to be reckoned a contemner of the King’s majesty, and for that crime to be committed to prison, but he who refuses to accept the King’s coin made of lawful metal ; by which, as I observed before, silver and gold only are intended.

That this is the true construction of the act, appears not only from the plain meaning of the words, but from my Lord Coke’s observation upon it. ‘ By this act,’ says he, ‘ it appears, that no subject can be forced to take, in buying, or selling, or other payment, any money made but of lawful metal ; that is, of silver or gold.’

The law of England gives the King all mines of gold and silver, but not the mines of other metals ; the reason of which prerogative or power, as it is given by my Lord Coke, is, because money can be made of gold and silver, but not of other metals.

Pursuant to this opinion, halfpence and farthings were anciently made of silver, which is evident from the Act of

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Parliament of Henry the Fourth, chap. 4, whereby it is enacted as follows : ' Item, for the great scarcity that is at present within the realm of England of halfpence and farthings of silver, it is ordained and established, that the third part of all the money of silver plate which shall be brought to the bullion, shall be made into halfpence and farthings.' This shows that by the words ' halfpence and farthings of lawful money,' in that statute concerning the passing of pence, is meant a small coin in halfpence and farthings of silver.

This is farther manifest from the statute of the ninth year of Edward the Third, chap. 3, which enacts, ' that no sterling halfpenny or farthing be molten for to make vessels, or any other thing, by the goldsmiths, or others, upon forfeiture of the money so molten ' (or melted).

By another act in this King's reign, black money was not to be current in England. And by an act in the eleventh year of his reign, chap. 5, galley halfpence were not to pass. What kind of coin these were, I do not know; but I presume they were made of base metal. And these acts were no new laws, but farther declarations of the old laws relative to the coin.

Thus the law stands in relation to coin. Nor is there any example to the contrary, except one in Davis's Reports, who tells us, ' that in the time of Tyrone's rebellion, Queen Elizabeth ordered money of mixed metal to be coined in the Tower of London, and sent over hither for the payment of the army, obliging all people to receive it; and commanding that all silver money should be taken only as bullion ; ' that is, for as much as it weighed. Davis tells us several particulars in this matter, too long here to trouble you with, and ' that the Privy-council of

this kingdom obliged a merchant in England to receive this mixed money for goods transmitted hither.'

But this proceeding is rejected by all the best lawyers, as contrary to law, the Privy-council here having no such legal power. And besides, it is to be considered, that the Queen was then under great difficulties by a rebellion in this kingdom, assisted from Spain; and whatever is done in great exigencies and dangerous times, should never be an example to proceed by in seasons of peace and quietness.

I will now, my dear friends, to save you the trouble, set before you, in short, what the law obliges you to do, and what it does not oblige you to.

First, You are obliged to take all money in payments which is coined by the King, and is of the English standard or weight, provided it be of gold or silver.

Secondly, You are not obliged to take any money which is not of gold or silver; not only the halfpence or farthings of England, but of any other country. And it is merely for convenience, or ease, that you are content to take them; because the custom of coining silver halfpence and farthings has long been left off; I suppose on account of their being subject to be lost.

Thirdly, Much less are you obliged to take those vile halfpence of the same Wood, by which you must lose almost eleven pence in every shilling.

Therefore, my friends, stand to it one and all: refuse this filthy trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His Majesty, in his patent, obliges nobody to take these halfpence: our gracious prince has no such ill advisers about him; or, if he had, yet you see the laws have not left it in the King's power to force us to take any

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coin but what is lawful, of right standard, gold and silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear.

And let me in the next place apply myself particularly to you who are the poorer sort of tradesmen. Perhaps you may think you will not be so great losers as the rich, if these halfpence should pass ; because you seldom see any silver, and your customers come to your shops or stalls with nothing but brass, which you likewise find hard to be got. But you may take my word, whenever this money gains footing among you, you will be utterly undone. If you carry these halfpence to a shop for tobacco or brandy, or any other thing that you want, the shopkeeper will advance his goods accordingly, or else he must break, and leave the key under the door. ‘ Do you think I will sell you a yard of ten-penny stuff for twenty of Mr. Wood’s halfpence ? No, not under two hundred at least ; neither will I be at the trouble of counting, but weigh them in a lump.’ I will tell you one thing farther, that if Mr. Wood’s project should take, it would ruin even our beggars ; for when I give a beggar a halfpenny, it will quench his thirst, or go a good way to fill his belly ; but the twelfth part of a halfpenny will do him no more service than if I should give him three pins out of my sleeve.

In short, these halfpence are like ‘ the accursed thing, which,’ as the Scripture tells us, ‘ the children of Israel were forbidden to touch.’ They will run about like the plague, and destroy every one who lays his hand upon them. I have heard scholars talk of a man who told the King, that he had invented a way to torment people, by putting them into a bull of brass with fire under it ; but the prince put the projector first into his brazen bull, to make the experiment. This very much resembles the

project of Mr. Wood ; and the like of this may possibly be Mr. Wood's fate ; that the brass he contrived to torment this kingdom with, may prove his own torment, and his destruction at last.

N.B.—The author of this paper is informed by persons, who have made it their business to be exact in their observations on the true value of these halfpence, that any person may expect to get a quart of twopenny ale for thirty-six of them.

I desire that all families may keep this paper carefully by them, to refresh their memories whenever they shall have farther notice of Mr. Wood's halfpence, or any other the like imposture.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO 'THE TATLER,' 'THE EXAMINER,' AND 'THE SPECTATOR'

THE three papers that follow were contributed by Swift to the three chief periodicals of his day. *The Tatler* was projected and edited by Richard Steele. It began its career in 1709, and the last number appeared on January 2, 1711. Its aim, in the words of its editor, was 'to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behaviour.' It was also to contain foreign news, a project rendered possible by the fact that Steele had been recently appointed Gazetteer, and thus had access to foreign intelligence. The assistance of Addison was enlisted, and to Addison the paper largely owes its fame. Steele recognised this at once. 'I fared,' he writes, 'like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him.' *The Tatler* became extremely popular and had an immense circulation. Swift contributed a few papers to the periodical, but political differences led later to estrangements, and finally he retired from the venture altogether.

*The Examiner* issued its first number on August 3, 1710, and continued until July 26, 1711. It was frankly a political paper, intended to ventilate and propagate Tory principles. Harley and St. John saw the necessity for this, and at an early stage called the powerful pen of Swift to their aid. Swift's contributions made an irresistible appeal, and their value to the Party which he served was incalculable.

*The Spectator*, projected by Steele, and made famous by Addison, was first issued on March 1, 1711, and continued until December 6, 1712. Swift contributed one paper only. His reference to it in his *Journal to Stella*, under date April 28, 1711, is as follows: '*The Spectator* is written by Steele with Addison's help: 'tis often very pretty. Yesterday it was made of a noble hint I gave him long ago for his *Tatlers*, about an Indian supposed to write his travels into England. I repeat he ever had it. I intended to have written a book on that subject. I believe he has spent it all on one paper, and all the under hints there are mine too.'

## THE TATLER (No. 230)

From my own Apartment, *Sept.* 27, 1710.

The following letter has laid before me many great and manifest evils in the world of letters which I had overlooked ; but they open to me a very busy scene, and it will require no small care and application to amend errors which are become so universal. The affectation of politeness is exposed in this epistle with a great deal of wit and discernment ; so that whatever discourses I may fall into hereafter upon the subjects the writer treats of, I shall at present lay the matter before the World without the least alteration from the words of my correspondent.

'To ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, ESQ.

'SIR,

'There are some abuses among us of great consequence, the reformation of which is properly your province, though, as far as I have been conversant in your papers, you have not yet considered them. These are the deplorable ignorance that for some years hath reigned among our English writers, the great depravity of our taste, and the continual corruption of our style. I say nothing here of those who handle particular sciences, divinity, law, physic, and the like ; I mean, the traders in history and politics, and the *belles lettres* ; together with those by whom books are not translated, but (as the common expressions are) 'done out of French, Latin,' or other language, and 'made English.' I cannot but observe to you, that till of late years a Grub-Street book was always bound in sheepskin, with suitable print and paper, the price never above a shilling, and taken off wholly by

common tradesmen, or country pedlars, but now they appear in all sizes and shapes, and in all places. They are handed about from lapfuls in every coffeehouse to persons of quality, are shewn in Westminster Hall and the Court of Requests. You may see them gilt, and in royal paper, of five or six hundred pages, and rated accordingly. I would engage to furnish you with a catalogue of English books published within the compass of seven years past, which at the first hand would cost you a hundred pounds, wherein you shall not be able to find ten lines together of common grammar or common sense.

‘ These two evils, ignorance and want of taste, have produced a third ; I mean, the continual corruption of our English tongue, which, without some timely remedy, will suffer more by the false refinements of twenty years past, than it hath been improved in the foregoing hundred: And this is what I design chiefly to enlarge upon, leaving the former evils to your animadversion.

‘ But instead of giving you a list of the late refinements crept into our language, I here send you the copy of a letter I received some time ago from a most accomplished person in this way of writing, upon which I shall make some remarks. It is in these terms :

‘ “ SIR,

“ I *cou’dn’t* get the things you sent for all *about Town*. — I *thôt to ha’* come down myself, and then *I’d ha’ brôut ’um* ; but I *han’t don’t*, and I believe I *can’t do’t*, that’s *pozz*. — *Tom* begins to *g’imself airs* because *he’s* going with the *plenipo’s*. — ’Tis said, the *French king* will *bamboozl’ us agen*, which *causes many speculations*. The *Jacks* and others of that *kidney*, are very *uppish*, and *alert upon’t*, as you may see by their *phizz’s*. — *Will Hazzard* has got the

*hipps*, having lost to the tune of five hundr'd pounds, *thó* he understands play very well, *nobody better*. He has promis't me upon *rep*, to leave off play; but you know 'tis a weakness *he's* too apt to *give into*, *thó* he has as much wit as any man, *nobody more*. He has lain *incoy* ever since.—The *mobb's* very quiet with us now.—I believe you *thót* I *banter'd* you in my last like a *country put*.—I *sha'n't* leave Town this month, etc."

'This letter is in every point an admirable pattern of the present polite way of writing; nor is it of less authority for being an epistle. You may gather every flower in it, with a thousand more of equal sweetness, from the books, pamphlets, and single papers, offered us every day in the coffeehouses. And these are the beauties introduced to supply the want of wit, sense, humour, and learning, which formerly were looked upon as qualifications for a writer. If a man of wit, who died forty years ago, were to rise from the grave on purpose, how would he be able to read this letter? And after he had gone through that difficulty, how would he be able to understand it? The first thing that strikes your eye is the *breaks* at the end of almost every sentence; of which I know not the use, only that it is a refinement, and very frequently practised. Then you will observe the abbreviations and elisions, by which consonants of most obdurate sound are joined together, without one softening vowel to intervene; and all this only to make one syllable of two, directly contrary to the example of the Greeks and Romans; altogether of the Gothic strain, and a natural tendency towards relapsing into barbarity, which delights in monosyllables, and uniting of mute consonants; as it is observable in all the Northern languages. And this is

still more visible in the next refinement, which consists in pronouncing the first syllable in a word that has many, and dismissing the rest ; such as *phizz*, *hipps*, *mobb*, *poz*, *rep*, and many more ; when we are already overloaded with monosyllables, which are the disgrace of our language. Thus we cram one syllable, and cut off the rest ; as the owl fattened her mice, after she had bit off their legs to prevent their running away ; and if ours be the same reason for maiming words, it will certainly answer the end ; for I am sure no other Nation will desire to borrow them. Some words are hitherto but fairly split, and therefore only in their way to perfection, as *incog* and *plenipo* : But in a short time it is to be hoped they will be further docked to *inc* and *plen*. This reflection has made me of late years very impatient for a peace, which I believe would save the lives of many brave words, as well as men. The war has introduced abundance of polysyllables, which will never be able to live many more campaigns ; *Speculations*, *operations*, *preliminaries*, *ambassadors*, *palisadoes*, *communication*, *circumvallation*, *battalions*, as numerous as they are, if they attack us too frequently in our coffeehouses, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear.

‘ The third refinement observable in the letter I send you, consists in the choice of certain words invented by some pretty fellows ; such as *banter*, *bamboozle*, *country put*, and *kidney*, as it is there applied ; some of which are now struggling for the vogue, and others are in possession of it. I have done my utmost for some years past to stop the progress of *mobb* and *banter*, but have been plainly borne down by numbers, and betrayed by those who promised to assist me.

'In the last place, you are to take notice of certain choice phrases scattered through the letter; some of them tolerable enough, till they were worn to rags by servile imitators. You might easily find them, though they were not in a different print, and therefore I need not disturb them.

'These are the false refinements in our style which you ought to correct: First by argument and fair means; but if those fail, I think you are to make use of your authority as Censor, and by an annual *index expurgatorius* expunge all words and phrases that are offensive to good sense, and condemn those barbarous mutilations of vowels and syllables. In this last point the usual pretence is, that they spell as they speak; a noble standard for language! to depend upon the caprice of every coxcomb, who, because words are the clothing of our thoughts, cuts them out, and shapes them as he pleases, and changes them oftener than his dress. I believe, all reasonable people would be content that such refiners were more sparing in their words, and liberal in their syllables: And upon this head I should be glad you would bestow some advice upon several young readers in our churches, who coming up from the University, full fraught with admiration of our Town politeness, will needs correct the style of their Prayer-Books. In reading the absolution, they are very careful to say "*Pardons and absolves*;" and in the Prayer for the Royal Family, it must be *endue 'um, enrich 'um, prosper 'um and bring 'um*. Then in their sermons they use all the modern terms of art, *sham, banter, mob, bubble, bully, cutting, shuffling, and palming*, all which, and many more of the like stamp, as I have heard them often in the pulpit from such young sophisters,

nation. So that, by this account, lying is the last relief of a routed, earth-born, rebellious party in a state. But here the moderns have made great additions, applying this art to the gaining of power and preserving it, as well as revenging themselves after they have lost it ; as the same instruments are made use of by animals to feed themselves when they are hungry, and to bite those that tread upon them.

But the same genealogy cannot always be admitted for political lying ; I shall therefore desire to refine upon it, by adding some circumstances of its birth and parents. A political lie is sometimes born out of a discarded statesman's head, and thence delivered to be nursed and dandled by the rabble. Sometimes it is produced a monster, and licked into shape : at other times it comes into the world completely formed, and is spoiled in the licking. It is often born an infant in the regular way, and requires time to mature it ; and often it sees the light in its full growth, but dwindles away by degrees. Sometimes it is of noble birth, and sometimes the spawn of a stock-jobber. I know a lie that now disturbs half the kingdom with its noise, which, although too proud and great at present to own its parents, I can remember in its whisperhood.

No wonder if an infant so miraculous in its birth should be destined for great adventures ; and accordingly we see it has been the guardian spirit of a prevailing party for almost twenty years. It can conquer kingdoms without fighting, and sometimes with the loss of a battle. It gives and resumes employments ; can sink a mountain to a mole-hill, and raise a mole-hill to a mountain : has presided for many years at committees of elections ; can

wash a blackamoor white ; can make a saint of an atheist, and a patriot of a profligate ; can furnish foreign ministers with intelligence, and raise or let fall the credit of the nation. This goddess flies with a huge looking-glass in her hands, to dazzle the crowd, and make them see, according as she turns it, their ruin in their interest and their interest in their ruin. In this glass you will behold your best friends, clad in coats powdered with *fleurs de lis* and triple crowns ; their girdles hung round with chains, and beads, and wooden shoes ; and your worst enemies adorned with the ensigns of liberty, property, indulgence, moderation, and a cornucopia in their hands. Her large wings, like those of a flying fish, are of no use but while they were moist ; she therefore dips them in mud, and, soaring aloft, scatters it in the eyes of the multitude, flying with great swiftness ; but at every turn is forced to stoop in dirty ways for new supplies.

I have been sometimes thinking, if a man had the art of the second sight for seeing lies, as they have in Scotland for seeing spirits, how admirably he might entertain himself in this town, by observing the different shapes, sizes, and colours of those swarms of lies which buzz about the heads of some people, like flies about a horse's ears in summer ; or those legions hovering every afternoon in Exchange-alley, enough to darken the air ; or over a club of discontented grantees, and thence sent down in cargoes to be scattered at elections.

There is one essential point wherein a political liar differs from others of the faculty, that he ought to have but a short memory, which is necessary, according to the various occasions he meets with every hour of differing from himself, and swearing to both sides of a contradic-



tion, as he finds the persons disposed with whom he has to deal. In describing the virtues and vices of mankind, it is convenient, upon every article, to have some eminent person in our eye, from whom we copy our description. I have strictly observed this rule, and my imagination this minute represents before me a certain great man (Earl of Wharton) famous for this talent, to the constant practice of which he owes his twenty years' reputation of the most skilful head in England for the management of nice affairs. The superiority of his genius consists in nothing else but an inexhaustible fund of political lies, which he plentifully distributes every minute he speaks, and by an unparalleled generosity forgets, and consequently contradicts, the next half hour. He never yet considered whether any proposition were true or false, but whether it were convenient for the present minute or company to affirm or deny it; so that, if you think to refine upon him, by interpreting everything he says, as we do dreams, by the contrary, you are still to seek, and will find yourself equally deceived whether you believe him or no: the only remedy is to suppose that you have heard some inarticulate sounds, without any meaning at all; and besides, that will take off the horror you might be apt to conceive at the oaths wherewith he perpetually tags both ends of every proposition: although, at the same time, I think he cannot with any justice be taxed with perjury when he invokes God and Christ, because he has often fairly given public notice to the world that he believes in neither.

Some people may think that such an accomplishment as this can be of no great use to the owner, or his party, after it has been often practised and is become notorious; but

they are widely mistaken. Few lies carry the inventor's mark, and the most prostitute enemy to truth may spread a thousand without being known for the author : besides, as the vilest writer has his readers, so the greatest liar has his believers : and it often happens that, if a lie be believed only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no further occasion for it. Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it, so that when men come to be undeceived it is too late ; the jest is over, and the tale has had its effect : like a man who has thought of a good repartee when the discourse is changed or the company parted ; or like a physician who has found out an infallible medicine after the patient is dead.

Considering that natural disposition in many men to lie, and in multitudes to believe, I have been perplexed what to do with that maxim so frequent in everybody's mouth, that truth will at last prevail. Here has this island of ours, for the greatest part of twenty years, lain under the influence of such counsels and persons, whose principle and interest it was to corrupt our manners, blind our understandings, drain our wealth, and in time destroy our constitution both in Church and State, and we at last were brought to the very brink of ruin ; yet by the means of perpetual misrepresentations, have never been able to distinguish between our enemies and friends. We have seen a great part of the nation's money got into the hands of those who, by their birth, education, and merit, could pretend no higher than to wear our liveries ; while others, who, by their credit, quality, and fortune, were only able to give reputation and success to the Revolution, were not only laid aside as dangerous and useless, but loaded with the scandal of Jacobites, men of arbitrary principles,

and pensioners to France ; while truth, who is said to lie in a well, seemed now to be buried there under a heap of stones. But I remember it was a usual complaint among the Whigs, that the bulk of the landed men was not in their interests, which some of the wisest looked on as an ill omen ; and we saw it was with the utmost difficulty that they could preserve a majority, while the court and ministry were on their side, till they had learned those admirable expedients for deciding elections and influencing distant boroughs by powerful motives from the city. But all this was mere force and constraint, however upheld by most dexterous artifice and management, until the people began to apprehend their properties, their religion, and the monarchy itself in danger ; when we saw them greedily laying hold on the first occasion to interpose. But of this mighty change in the dispositions of the people I shall discourse more at large in some following paper : wherein I shall endeavour to undeceive or discover those deluded or deluding persons who hope or pretend it is only a short madness in the vulgar, from which they may soon recover ; whereas, I believe it will appear to be very different in its causes, its symptoms, and its consequences ; and prove a great example to illustrate the maxim I lately mentioned, that truth (however sometimes late) will at last prevail.

#### THE SPECTATOR (No. 50)

When the four Indian kings were in this country about a twelvemonth ago, I often mixed with the rabble and followed them a whole day together, being wonderfully struck with the sight of everything that is new or uncommon. I have, since their departure, employed a

friend to make many enquiries of their landlord the upholsterer relating to their manners and conversation, as also concerning the remarks which they made in this country : for next to the forming a right notion of such strangers, I should be desirous of learning what ideas they have conceived of us.

The upholsterer finding my friend very inquisitive about these his lodgers, brought him some time since a little bundle of papers, which he assured him were written by King Sa Ga Yean Qua Rash Tow, and, as he supposes, left behind by some mistake. These papers are now translated, and contain abundance of very odd observations, which I find this little fraternity of kings made during their stay in the isle of Great Britain. I shall present my reader with a short specimen of them in this paper, and may perhaps communicate more to him hereafter. In the article of London are the following words, which without doubt are meant of the Church of St. Paul.

' On the most rising part of the town there stands a huge house, big enough to contain the whole nation of which I am king. Our good brother E Tow O Koam, king of the Rivers, is of opinion it was made by the hands of that great God to whom it is consecrated. The kings of Granajah and of the Six Nations believe that it was created with the earth, and produced on the same day with the sun and moon. But for my own part, by the best information that I could get of this matter, I am apt to think that this prodigious pile was fashioned into the shape it now bears by several tools and instruments, of which they have a wonderful variety in this country. It was probably at first an huge mis-shapen rock that grew upon the top of the hill, which the natives of the country

(after having cut it into a kind of regular figure) bored and hollowed with incredible pains and industry, till they had wrought in it all those beautiful vaults and caverns into which it is divided at this day. As soon as this rock was thus curiously scooped to their liking, a prodigious number of hands must have been employed in chipping the outside of it, which is now as smooth as polished marble ; and is in several places hewn out into pillars that stand like the trunks of so many trees bound about the top with garlands of leaves. It is probable when this great work was begun, which must have been many hundred years ago, there was some religion among this people ; for they give it the name of a temple, and have a tradition that it was designed for men to pay their devotions in. And indeed, there are several reasons which make us think, that the natives of this country had formerly among them some sort of worship ; for they set apart every seventh day as sacred : but upon my going into one of those holy houses on that day, I could not observe any circumstance of devotion in their behaviour. There was indeed a man in black who was mounted above the rest, and seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence ; but as for those underneath him, instead of paying their worship to the Deity of the place, they were most of them bowing and curtsying to one another, and a considerable number of them fast asleep.

‘The Queen of the country appointed two men to attend us, that had enough of our language to make themselves understood in some few particulars. But we soon perceived these two were great enemies to one another, and did not always agree in the same story. We could make a shift to gather out of one of them, that

this island was very much infested with a monstrous kind of animals, in the shape of men, called Whigs; and he often told us that he hoped we should meet with none of them in our way, for that if we did, they would be apt to knock us down for being kings.

'Our other interpreter used to talk very much of a kind of animal called a Tory, that was as great a monster as the Whig, and would treat us as ill for being foreigners. These two creatures, it seems, are born with a secret antipathy to one another, and engage when they meet as naturally as the elephant and the rhinoceros. But as we saw none of either of these species, we are apt to think that our guides deceived us with misrepresentations and fictions, and amused us with an account of such monsters as are not really in their country.

'These particulars we made a shift to pick out from the discourse of our interpreters; which we put together as well as we could, being able to understand but here and there a word of what they said, and afterwards making up the meaning of it among ourselves. The men of the country are very cunning and ingenious in handicraft works; but withal so very idle, that we often saw young lusty raw-boned fellows carried up and down the streets in little covered rooms by a couple of porters who are hired for that service. Their dress is likewise very barbarous, for they almost strangle themselves about the neck, and bind their bodies with many ligatures, that we are apt to think are the occasion of several distempers among them which our country is entirely free from. Instead of those beautiful feathers with which we adorn our heads, they often buy up a monstrous bush of hair, which covers their heads, and falls down in a large fleece

below the middle of their backs ; with which they walk up and down the streets, and are as proud of it as if it was of their own growth.

‘ We were invited to one of their public diversions, where we hoped to have seen the great men of their country running down a stag or pitching a bar, that we might have discovered who were the men of the greatest perfections in their country ; but instead of that, they conveyed us into an huge room lighted up with abundance of candles, where this lazy people sat still above three hours to see several feats of ingenuity performed by others, who it seems were paid for it.

‘ As for the women of the country, not being able to talk with them, we could only make our remarks upon them at a distance. They let the hair of their heads grow to a great length ; but as the men make a great show with heads of hair that are none of their own, the women, who they say have very fine heads of hair, tie it up in a knot and cover it from being seen. The women look like angels, and would be more beautiful than the sun, were it not for little black spots that are apt to break out in their faces, and sometimes rise in very odd figures. I have observed that those little blemishes wear off very soon ; but when they disappear in one part of the face, they are very apt to break out in another, insomuch that I have seen a spot upon the fore-head in the afternoon, which was upon the chin in the morning.’

## MISCELLANEOUS

### HINTS TOWARD AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION

I HAVE observed few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or at least so slightly, handled as this ; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seems so much to be said.

Most things pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life, our wit or folly have so refined, that they seldom subsist but in idea ; a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection : but in conversation it is, or might be, otherwise ; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remains as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seems to me, that the truest way to understand conversation, is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requires few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire, without any great genius or study. For nature has left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company ; and there are a hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults that they



might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldomer observed, since there are few so obvious, or acknowledged, into which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance : nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talking too much ; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together, where some one among them has not been predominant in that kind, to the great constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober, deliberate talker, who proceeds with much thought and caution, makes his preface, branches out into several digressions, finds a hint that puts him in mind of another story, which he promises to tell you when this is done ; comes back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holding his head, complains of his memory ; the whole company all this while in suspense ; at length says, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proves at last a story the company has heard fifty times before ; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is that of those who affect to talk of themselves : some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives ; will

relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them ; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise : they will call a witness to remember they always foretold what would happen in such a case, but none would believe them ; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences, just as they happened ; but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults ; they are the strangest men in the world ; they cannot dissemble ; they own it is a folly ; they have lost abundance of advantages by it ; but if you would give them the world, they cannot help it ; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint ; with many other insufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others ; without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men, than theirs have with him ; and how little that is he is sensible enough.

Where a company has met, I often have observed two persons discover, by some accident, that they were bred together at the same school or university : after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army who will sit for some time with a supercilious and impatient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking ; at length, of a sudden, demanding audience, decide the matter in

a short dogmatical way ; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation which none are so subject to as the men of wit, nor ever so much as when they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost : it is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers-by may be disappointed, and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought together in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside : he neither expects to be informed or entertained, but to display his own talents. His business is to be good company, and not good conversation ; and therefore he chooses to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Will's coffee-house, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble ; that is to say, five or six men who had writ plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling composures, in so important an air as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them ; and they were

usually attended with an humble audience of young students from the inns of court, or the universities ; who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash, under the name of politeness, criticism, and *belles lettres*.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not properly used ; because pedantry is the too frequent or unseasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it ; by which definition, men of the court, or the army, may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine ; and it is the same vice in women, when they are over copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take ; because, besides the imputation of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

The great town is usually provided with some player, mimic, or buffoon, who has a general reception at the good tables ; familiar and domestic with persons of the first quality, and usually sent for at every meeting to divert the company ; against which I have no objection. You go there as to a farce or a puppet-show ; your business is only to laugh in season, either out of inclination or civility, while this merry companion is acting his part. It is a business he has undertaken, and we are to suppose he is paid for his day's work. I only quarrel, when, in select and private meetings, where men of wit and learning are invited to pass an evening, this jester should be

admitted to run over his circle of tricks, and make the whole company unfit for any other conversation, beside the indignity of confounding men's talents at so shameful a rate.

Raillery is the finest part of conversation ; but, as it is our usual custom to counterfeit and adulterate whatever is too dear for us, so we have done with this, and turned it all into what is generally called repartee, or being smart ; just as when an expensive fashion comes up, those who are not able to reach it content themselves with some paltry imitation. It now passes for raillery to run a man down in discourse, to put him out of countenance, and make him ridiculous ; sometimes to expose the defects of his person or understanding ; on all which occasions, he is obliged not to be angry, to avoid the imputation of not being able to take a jest. It is admirable to observe one who is dexterous at this art, singling out a weak adversary, getting the laugh on his side, and then carrying all before him. The French, from whence we borrow the word, have a quite different idea of the thing, and so had we in the politer age of our fathers. Raillery was to say something that at first appeared a reproach or reflection, but, by some turn of wit, unexpected and surprising, ended always in a compliment, and to the advantage of the person it was addressed to. And surely one of the best rules in conversation is, never to say a thing which any of the company can reasonably wish we had rather left unsaid : nor can there anything be well more contrary to the ends for which people meet together, than to part unsatisfied with each other or themselves.

There are two faults in conversation, which appear very different, yet arise from the same root, and are equally

blameable; I mean an impatience to interrupt others; and the uneasiness of being interrupted ourselves. The two chief ends of conversation are to entertain and improve those we are among, or to receive those benefits ourselves; which whoever will consider, cannot easily run into either of these two errors; because, when any man speaks in company, it is to be supposed he does it for his hearers' sake, and not his own; so that common discretion will teach us not to force their attention, if they are not willing to lend it; nor, on the other side, to interrupt him who is in possession, because that is in the grossest manner to give the preference to our own good sense.

There are some people whose good manners will not suffer them to interrupt you, but, what is almost as bad, will discover abundance of impatience, and lie upon the watch until you have done, because they have started something in their own thoughts, which they long to be delivered of. Meantime, they are so far from regarding what passes, that their imaginations are wholly turned upon what they have in reserve, for fear it should slip out of their memory; and thus they confine their invention, which might otherwise range over a hundred things full as good, and that might be much more naturally introduced.

There is a sort of rude familiarity, which some people by practising among their intimates, have introduced into their general conversation, and would have it pass for innocent freedom or humour; which is a dangerous experiment in our northern climate, where all the little decorum and politeness we have are purely forced by art, and are so ready to lapse into barbarity. This, among the

Romans, was the raillery of slaves, of which we have many instances in Plautus. It seems to have been introduced among us by Cromwell, who, by preferring the scum of the people, made it a court entertainment, of which I have heard many particulars ; and, considering all things were turned upside down, it was reasonable and judicious ; although it was a piece of policy found out to ridicule a point of honour in the other extreme, when the smallest word misplaced among gentlemen ended in a duel.

There are some men excellent at telling a story, and provided with a plentiful stock of them, which they can draw out upon occasion in all companies ; and, considering how low conversation runs now among us, it is not altogether a contemptible talent ; however, it is subject to two unavoidable defects, frequent repetition, and being soon exhausted ; so that, whoever values this gift in himself, has need of a good memory, and ought frequently to shift his company, that he may not discover the weakness of his fund ; for those who are thus endued have seldom any other revenue, but live upon the main stock.

Great speakers in public are seldom agreeable in private conversation, whether their faculty be natural, or acquired by practice, and often venturing. Natural elocution, although it may seem a paradox, usually springs from a barrenness of invention, and of words ; by which men who have only one stock of notions upon every subject, and one set of phrases to express them in, they swim upon the superficies, and offer themselves on every occasion ; therefore men of much learning, and who know the compass of a language, are generally the worst talkers on a sudden, until much practice has inured and emboldened them ;

because they are confounded with plenty of matter, variety of notions and of words, which they cannot readily choose, but are perplexed and entangled by too great a choice ; which is no disadvantage in private conversation ; where, on the other side, the talent of haranguing is, of all others, most unsupportable.

Nothing has spoiled men more for conversation than the character of being wits ; to support which they never fail of encouraging a number of followers and admirers, who list themselves in their service, wherein they find their accounts on both sides by pleasing their mutual vanity. This has given the former such an air of superiority, and made the latter so pragmatistical, that neither of them are well to be endured. I say nothing here of the itch of dispute and contradiction, telling of lies, or of those who are troubled with the disease called the wandering of the thoughts, so that they are never present in mind at what passes in discourse ; for whoever labours under any of these possessions, is as unfit for conversation as a madman in Bedlam.

I think I have gone over most of the errors in conversation that have fallen under my notice or memory, except some that are merely personal, and others too gross to need exploding ; such as lewd or profane talk ; but I pretend only to treat the errors of conversation in general, and not the several subjects of discourse, which would be infinite. Thus we see how human nature is most debased, by the abuse of that faculty which is held the great distinction between men and brutes : and how little advantage we make of that, which might be the greatest, the most lasting, and the most innocent, as well as useful pleasure of life : in default of which we are forced to take



up with those poor amusements of dress and visiting, or the more pernicious ones of play, drink, and vicious amours ; whereby the nobility and gentry of both sexes are entirely corrupted, both in body and mind, and have lost all notions of love, honour, friendship, generosity : which, under the name of fopperies, have been for some time laughed out of doors.

This degeneracy of conversation, with the pernicious consequences thereof upon our humours and dispositions, has been owing, among other causes, to the custom arisen, for some time past, of excluding women from any share in our society, further than in parties at play, or dancing, or in the pursuit of an amour. I take the highest period of politeness in England (and it is of the same date in France) to have been the peaceable part of King Charles I.'s reign, and from what we read of those times, as well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversation were altogether different from ours : several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started ; although we are apt to ridicule the sublime Platonic notions they had, or personated, in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of the romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature, without which it is apt to degenerate into everything that is sordid, vicious, and low. If there were no other use in the conversation of ladies, it is sufficient that it would lay

a restraint upon those odious topics of immodesty and indecencies, into which the rudeness of our northern genius is so apt to fall. And, therefore, it is observable in those sprightly gentlemen about the town, who are so very dexterous at entertaining a vizard mask in the park or the playhouse, that in the company of ladies of virtue and honour, they are silent and disconcerted, and out of their element.

There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, nor at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day ; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place ; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. It is not a fault in company to talk much ; but to continue it long is certainly one ; for, if the majority of those who are got together be naturally silent or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them, who can start new subjects, provided he does not dwell upon them, but leaves room for answers and replies.

### THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

WE have just religion enough to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not do so much as take warning ?

No preacher is listened to but Time, which gives us the

same train and turn of thought that elder people have in vain tried to put into our heads before.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and false opinions he had contracted in the former.

Would a writer know how to behave himself with relation to posterity, let him consider in old books what he finds that he is glad to know, and what omissions he most laments.

When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

'Tis pleasant to observe how free the present age is in laying taxes on the next. Future ages shall talk of this ; this shall be famous to all posterity ; whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about present things, as ours are now.

Some men, under the notion of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honesty, and religion.

I have known some men possessed of good qualities which were very serviceable to others, but useless to themselves ; like a sun-dial on the front of a house, to inform the neighbours and passengers, but not the owner within.

Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet, perhaps, as few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold, which the owner knows not of.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

Some people take more care to hide their wisdom, than their folly.

The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter, and a scarcity of words ; for whoever is a master of language, and has a mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate upon the choice of both ; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in ; and these are always ready at the mouth ; so people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

To be vain is rather a mark of humility than pride. Vain men delight in telling what honours have been done them, what great company they have kept, and the like, by which they plainly confess that these honours were more than their due, and such as their friends would not believe, if they had not been told : whereas a man truly proud, thinks the greatest honours below his merit, and consequently scorns to boast. I therefore deliver it as a maxim, that whoever desires the character of a proud man, ought to conceal his vanity.

I knew three great ministers, who could exactly compute and settle the accounts of a kingdom, but were wholly ignorant of their own economy.

Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy, when great ones are not in the way : for want of a block he will stumble at a straw.

Dignity, high station, or great riches, are in some sort necessary to old men, in order to keep the younger at a distance, who are otherwise too apt to insult them upon the score of their age.

Every man desires to live long ; but no man would be old.

That was excellently observed, say I, when I read a

passage in an author, where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, then I pronounce him to be mistaken.

A man would have but few spectators, if he offered to show for threepence how he could thrust a red-hot iron into a barrel of gunpowder, and it should not take fire.

Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.

When I am reading a book, whether wise or silly, it seems to me to be alive and talking to me.

When I was young, I thought all the world, as well as myself, was wholly taken up in discoursing upon the last new play.

#### MEDITATION ON A BROOMSTICK

THIS single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest : it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs ; but now, in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk : it is now, at best, but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air ; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself : at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use, of kindling a fire. When I beheld this I sighed, and said within myself, SURELY MAN IS A BROOMSTICK ! Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of

intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk : he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs (all covered with powder), that never grew on his head ; but now, should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellences and other men's defaults !

But a Broomstick, perhaps, you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head ; and pray what is man, but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth ! and yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruption to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before ; sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away ; his last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving ; till, worn out to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

## POEMS

SWIFT as a poet is almost a negligible figure. He was a facile rhymester, and according to the poetical canons of his day was correct in diction and versification. But he had no imagination. There is no soul in his poetry, and he is at his best when writing light verses on trivial themes. Dryden's criticism at the beginning of Swift's career, 'Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet,' was justified in the light of subsequent performance. The more personal pieces have the most interest for us, not on account of their poetic merits, but as fragments of biography. Satiric humour and a vein of bitterness are discernible in most of Swift's poems. *Baucis and Philemon* pleased Goldsmith and is worth reading for its liveliness.

### BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

1706

IN ancient times, as story tells,  
The saints would often leave their cells,  
And stroll about, but hide their quality,  
To try good people's hospitality.

It happen'd on a winter's night,  
As authors of the legend write,  
Two brother hermits, saints by trade,  
Taking their tour in masquerade,  
Came to a village hard by Rixham,  
Ragged, and not a groat betwixt 'em.  
It rain'd as hard as it could pour,  
Yet they were forc'd to walk an hour  
From house to house, wet to the skin,  
Before one soul would let 'em in.

10

They call'd at every door—' Good people !  
My comrade's blind, and I'm a creeple.  
Here we lie starving in the street,  
'Twould grieve a body's heart to see't.  
No Christian would turn out a beast,  
In such a dreadful night at least !  
Give us but straw, and let us lie  
In yonder barn, to keep us dry !'  
Thus, in the strollers' usual cant,  
They begg'd relief which none would grant.  
No creature valued what they said.  
One family was gone to bed :  
The master bawl'd out half asleep,  
' You fellows, what a noise you keep !  
So many beggars pass this way  
We can't be quiet, night or day ;  
We cannot serve you every one,  
Pray take your answer, and be gone !'  
One swore he'd send 'em to the stocks :  
A third could not forbear his mocks,  
But bawl'd, as loud as he could roar,  
' You're on the wrong side of the door !'  
One surly clown look't out and said,  
' I'll fling a brick-bat on your head !  
You shan't come here, nor get a sous !  
You look like rogues would rob a house.  
Can't you go work or serve the King ?  
You blind and lame ? 'tis no such thing.  
That's but a counterfeit sore leg !  
For shame ! Two sturdy rascals beg !  
If I come down, I'll spoil your trick,  
And cure you both with a good stick !'

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Our wandering saints, in woful state,  
Treated at this ungodly rate,  
Having through all the village past,  
To a small cottage came at last, 50  
Where dwelt a good old honest ye'man,  
Call'd thereabout Goodman Philemon ;  
Who kindly did these saints invite  
In his poor hut to pass the night ;  
And then the hospitable sire  
Bid Goody Baucis mend the fire ;  
While he from out the chimney took  
A fitch of bacon off the hook,  
And freely from the fattest side  
Cut out large slices to be fried ; 60  
Which, tost up in a pan with batter  
And serv'd up in an earthen platter—  
Quoth Baucis, ' This is wholesome fare ;  
Eat, honest friends, and never spare !  
And if we find our victuals fail,  
We can but make it out in ale.'

To a small kilderkin of beer  
Brew'd in the good time of the year,  
Philemon, by his wife's consent,  
Stept with a jug, and made a vent ; 70  
And, having fill'd it to the brink,  
Invited both the saints to drink.  
When they had took a second draught,  
Behold, a miracle was wrought.  
For Baucis with amazement found,  
Although the jug had twice gone round,  
It still was full up to the top  
As if they ne'er had drunk a drop.

You may be sure so strange a sight  
Put the old people in a fright. 80

Philemon whispered to his wife,  
' These men are — saints ! I'll lay my life ! '

The strangers overheard, and said,

' You're in the right, but ben't afraid,

No hurt shall come to you or yours :

But for that pack of churlish boors,

Not fit to live on Christian ground,

They and their village shall be drown'd ;

Whilst you shall see your cottage rise,

And grow a church before your eyes.' 90

Scarce had they spoke, when fair and soft,

The roof began to mount aloft ;

Aloft rose every beam and rafter ;

The heavy wall went clambering after.

The chimney widen'd, and grew higher,

Became a steeple with a spire.

The kettle to the top was hoist,

And there stood fasten'd to the joist,

But with the upside down, to shew

Its inclination for below : 100

In vain ; for a superior force

Applied at bottom stops its course :

Doom'd ever in suspense to dwell,

'Tis now no kettle, but a bell.

A wooden jack, which had almost

Lost by disuse the art to roast,

A sudden alteration feels,

Increased by new intestine wheels ;

And, what exalts the wonder more,

The number made the motion slower. 110

The fier, though it had leaden feet,  
Turn'd round so quick you scarce could see't ;  
It now, stopt by some hidden powers,  
Moves round but twice in twice twelve hours:  
While in the station of a jack  
'Twas never known to shew its back,  
A friend in turns and windings tried,  
Nor ever left the chimney's side.  
The chimney to a steeple grown,  
The jack would not be left alone ; 120  
But, up against the steeple rear'd,  
Became a clock, and still adher'd ;  
And still its love to household cares,  
By a shrill voice at noon declares,  
Warning the cookmaid not to burn  
The roast meat, which it cannot turn.

The groaning-chair began to crawl,  
Like a huge insect up the wall ;  
There stuck, and to a pulpit grew,  
But kept its matter and its hue ; 130  
And, mindful of its ancient state,  
Still groans while tattling gossips prate.

The mortar only changed its name,  
In its old shape a font became.

The porringers, that in a row  
Hung high, and made a glittering show,  
To a less noble substance changed  
Were now but leathern buckets ranged.

The ballads, pasted on the wall,  
Of Chevy Chace, and English Moll, 140  
Fair Rosamond, and Robin Hood,  
The little Children in the Wood,

Enlarged in picture, size, and letter,  
And painted, look't abundance better :  
And now the heraldry describe  
Of a Churchwarden, or a Tribe.

A bedstead of the antique mode,  
Compact of timber many a load,  
Such as our grandfathers did use,  
Was metamorphosed into pews : 150  
Which still their former virtue keep  
Of lodging folks disposed to sleep.

The cottage, with such feats as these,  
Grown to a church by just degrees,  
The holy men desired their host  
To ask for what he fancied most.  
Philemon, having paused a while,  
Replied in complimentary style :  
' Your goodness, more than my desert,  
Makes you take all things in good part : 160  
You've raised a church here in a minute,  
And I would fain continue in it :  
I'm good for little at my days—  
Make me the parson, if you please.'

He spoke, and presently he feels  
His grazier's coat reach down his heels :  
The sleeves, new bordered with a list,  
Widen'd and gather'd at his wrist :  
His waistcoat to a cassock grew,  
And both assumed a sable hue, 170  
But, being old, continued just  
As threadbare and as full of dust.  
A shambling awkward gait he took,  
With a demure dejected look,

Talk't of his offerings, tithes, and dues,  
Could smoke, and drink, and read the news ;  
Or sell a goose at the next town,  
Decently hid beneath his gown,  
Contriv'd to preach old sermons next,  
Chang'd in the preface and the text ; 180  
At christenings well could act his part,  
And had the service all by heart.  
Against dissenters would repine,  
And stood up firm for ' right divine ' :  
Carried it to his equals high'r,  
But most obsequious to the squire.  
Found his head fill'd with many a system,  
But classic authors—he ne'er miss'd 'em.

Thus having furbished up a parson,  
Dame Baucis next they play'd their farce on. 190  
Instead of homespun coifs were seen  
Good pinner's edged with colberteen :  
Her petticoat, transform'd apace,  
Became black satin flounced with lace.  
' Plain Goody ' would no longer down,  
'Twas ' Madam ' in her grogram gown.  
Philemon was in great surprise,  
And hardly could believe his eyes,  
Amazed to see her look so prim,  
And she admired as much at him. 200

Thus happy in their change of life  
Were several years this man and wife,  
When, on a day which proved their last,  
Discoursing o'er old stories past,  
They went, by chance amid their talk,  
To the churchyard to take a walk :

When Baucis hastily cried out,  
 ' My dear, I see your forehead sprout ! '—  
 ' Sprout,' quoth the man ; ' what's this you tell us ?  
 I hope you don't believe me jealous !                      210  
 But yet, methinks, I feel it true,  
 And really yours is budding too—  
 Nay—now I cannot stir my foot,  
 It feels as if 'twere taking root.'

    Description would but tire my muse,  
 In short, they both were turn'd to yews.  
 Old Goodman Dobson of the Green  
 Remembers he the trees has seen :  
 He'll talk of them from noon till night,  
 And goes with folks to shew the sight.                      220  
 On Sundays, after evening prayer,  
 He gathers all the parish there,  
 Points out the place of either yew :  
 Here Baucis, there Philemon, grew ;  
 Till once a parson of our town  
 To mend his barn cut Baucis down,  
 At which, 'tis hard to be believed  
 How much the other tree was grieved,  
 Grew scrubby, died a-top, was stunted,  
 So the next parson stubb'd and burnt it.                      230

#### DR. SWIFT TO MR. POPE

WHILE HE WAS WRITING THE DUNCIAD, 1726

Pope has the talent well to speak,  
 But not to reach the ear ;  
 His loudest voice is low and weak,  
 The Dean too deaf to hear.

A while they on each other look,  
Then different studies choose ;  
The Dean sits plodding on a book ;  
Pope walks, and courts the Muse.

Now backs of letters, though design'd  
For those who more will need 'em, 10  
Are fill'd with hints, and interlined,  
Himself can hardly read 'em.

Each atom by some other struck,  
All turns and motions tries ;  
Till in a lump together stuck,  
Behold a poem rise.

Yet to the Dean his share allot ;  
He claims it by a canon ;  
That without which a thing is not,  
*Is causa sine quâ non.* 20

Thus, Pope, in vain you boast your wit ;  
For, had our deaf divine  
Been for your conversation fit,  
You had not writ a line.

Of Sherlock thus, for preaching famed,  
The sexton reason'd well ;  
And justly half the merit claim'd,  
Because he rang the bell.

## ON THE DEATH OF DR. SWIFT

1731

As Rochefoucault his maxims drew  
 From nature, I believe them true.  
 They argue no corrupted mind  
 In him ; the fault is in mankind.

This maxim more than all the rest  
 Is thought too base for human breast :

‘ In all distresses of our friends  
 We first consult our private ends ;  
 While Nature, kindly bent to ease us  
 Points out some circumstance to please us.’ 10

If this perhaps your patience move,  
 Let reason and experience prove.  
 We all behold with envious eyes  
 Our equal raised above our size.  
 Who would not at a crowded show  
 Stand high himself, keep others low ?  
 I love my friend as well as you  
 But would not have him stop my view.  
 Then let me have the higher post ;  
 Suppose it be an inch at most. 20

If, in a battle you should find  
 One, whom you love of all mankind  
 Had some heroic action done,  
 A champion kill’d, or trophy won,  
 Rather than thus be overtopp’d  
 Would you not wish his laurels cropp’d ?

Dear honest Ned is in the gout,  
 Lies rack’d with pain and you without :



How patiently you hear him groan !  
 How glad the case is not your own ! 30

What poet would not grieve to see  
 His brother write as well as he ?  
 But rather than they should excel  
 He'd wish his rivals all in hell.

Her end, when Emulation misses  
 She turns to Envy, Stings, and Hisses.  
 The strongest friendship yields to pride,  
 Unless the odds be on our side.  
 Vain human kind ! fantastic race !  
 Thy various follies who can trace ? 40  
 Self-love, ambition, envy, pride,  
 Their empire in our hearts divide.  
 Give others riches, power and station  
 'Tis all on me an usurpation.

I have no title to aspire ;  
 Yet, when you sink, I seem the higher.  
 In Pope, I cannot read a line,  
 But with a sigh, I wish it mine.  
 When he can in one couplet fix  
 More sense than I can do in six 50  
 It gives me such a jealous fit  
 I cry, ' Plague take him and his wit ! '  
 I grieve to be outdone by Gay  
 In my own humorous biting way.  
 Arbuthnot is no more my friend  
 Who dares to irony pretend,  
 Which I was born to introduce,  
 Refined it first and shew'd its use.  
 St. John, as well as Pult'ney, knows  
 That I had some repute for prose 60

And, till they drove me out of date,  
Could maul a minister of state.  
If they have mortified my pride  
And made me throw my pen aside,  
If with such talents Heaven has bless'd 'em,  
Have I not reason to detest 'em ?

To all my foes, dear Fortune, send  
Thy gifts, but never to my friend.  
I tamely can endure the first  
But this with envy makes me burst. 70

Thus much may serve by way of proem,  
Proceed we therefore to our poem.

The time is not remote, when I  
Must by the course of nature die ;  
When, I foresee, my special friends  
Will try to find their private ends.  
And, though 'tis hardly understood  
Which way my death can do them good,  
Yet thus, methinks, I hear them speak :  
' See how the Dean begins to break, 80  
Poor gentleman, he droops apace,  
You plainly find it in his face.  
That old vertigo in his head  
Will never leave him till he's dead.  
Besides, his memory decays,  
He recollects not what he says ;  
He cannot call his friends to mind,  
Forgets the place where last he dined,  
Plies you with stories o'er and o'er,  
He told them fifty times before. 90  
How does he fancy we can sit

•

To hear his out-of-fashion wit ?  
But he takes up with younger folks  
Who, for his wine, will bear his jokes.  
Faith, he must make his stories shorter  
Or change his comrades once a quarter.  
In half the time he talks them round,  
There must another set be found.

‘ For poetry he’s past his prime,  
He takes an hour to find a rhyme ; 100  
His fire is out, his wit decay’d,  
His fancy sunk, his Muse a jade.  
I’d have him throw away his pen,  
But there’s no talking to some men ! ’

And then their tenderness appears  
By adding largely to my years.  
‘ He’s older than he would be reckoned,  
And well remembers Charles the Second.  
He hardly drinks a pint of wine,  
And that, I doubt, is no good sign. 110  
His stomach, too, begins to fail,  
Last year we thought him strong and hale,  
But now he’s quite another thing  
I wish he may hold out till spring.’  
Then hug themselves and reason thus :  
‘ It is not yet so bad with us.’

In such a case they talk in tropes  
And by their fears express their hopes.  
Some great misfortune to portend  
No enemy can match a friend. 120  
With all the kindness they profess,  
The merit of a lucky guess  
(When daily How d’ye’s come of course

And servants answer 'Worse and worse.')

Would please them better than to tell  
That 'God be praised, the Dean is well.'

• Then he, who prophesied the best,  
Approves his foresight to the rest.

'You know, I always fear'd the worst,

' And often told you so at first.'

130

He'd rather choose that I should die,

Than his prediction prove a lie.

No one foretells I shall recover,

But all agree to give me over.

Yet, should some neighbour feel a pain

Just in the parts where I complain,

How many a message would he send,

What hearty prayers that I should mend!

Inquire, what regimen I kept?

What gave me ease, and how I slept?

140

And more lament when I was dead

Than all the snivellers round my bed.

My good companions, never fear!

For, though you may mistake a year,

Though your prognostics run too fast

They must be verified at last.

Behold the fatal day arrive—

'How is the Dean?' 'He's just alive.'

Now the departing prayer is read—

'He hardly breathes'—'The Dean is dead.'

150

Before the passing bell begun

The news through half the town is run.

'O, may we all for death prepare!

What has he left and who's his heir?'

'I know no more than what the news is,

'Tis all bequeathed to public uses.'

'To public uses, there's a whim !

What had the public done for him ?

Mere envy, avarice, and pride.

He gave it all—but, first he died.

And had the Dean, in all the nation,

No worthy friend, no poor relation ?

So ready to do strangers good,

Forgetting his own flesh and blood.'

Now, Grub-Street wits are all employ'd,

With elegies the town is cloy'd,

Some paragraph in every paper

To curse the Dean or bless the Drapier.

The doctors, tender of their fame,

Wisely on me lay all the blame.

'We must confess his case was nice,

But he would never take advice.

Had he been ruled, for aught appears,

He might have lived these twenty years ;

For, when we open'd him we found

That all his vital parts were sound.'

From Dublin soon to London spread

'Tis told at Court—'The Dean is dead.'

Kind Lady Suffolk, in the spleen,

Runs laughing up to tell the queen.

The queen, so gracious, mild and good,

Cries 'Is he gone ? 'tis time he should.

He's dead, you say, then let him rot,

I'm glad the medals were forgot.

I promised him, I own, but when ?

I only was the princess then,

But now, as consort of the king,

160

170

180

You know, 'tis quite a different thing.'

Now Chartres, at Sir Robert's levee,

Tells, with a sneer, the tidings heavy.

190

• 'Why, if he died without his shoes,'

(Cries Bob) 'I'm sorry for the news.

O, were the wretch but living still

And in his place my good friend Will,

Or had a mitre on his head

Provided Bolingbroke were dead !'

Now Curll his shop from rubbish drains ;

Three genuine tomes of Swift's remains !

And then, to make them pass the glibber,

Revised by Tibbalds, Moore, and Cibber !

200

He'll treat me as he does my betters,

Publish my will, my life, my letters,

Revive the libels, born to die,

Which Pope must bear, as well as I.

Here shift the scene to represent

How those I love my death lament.

Poor Pope will grieve a month ; and Gay

A week ; and Arbuthnot a day.

St. John himself will scarce forbear

To bite his pen and drop a tear.

210

The rest will give a shrug and cry

'I'm sorry—but we all must die.'

Indifference, clad in wisdom's guise,

All fortitude of mind supplies,

For how can stony bowels melt

In those who never pity felt ?

When we are lash'd, they kiss the rod,

Resigning to the will of God.

The fools, my juniors by a year,

Are tortur'd with suspense and fear, 220  
Who wisely thought my age a screen,  
When death approach'd, to stand between.  
The screen removed, their hearts are trembling.  
They mourn for me without dissembling.  
My female friends, whose tender hearts  
Have better learn'd to act their parts,  
Receive the news in doleful dumps :  
' The Dean is dead (pray what are trumps ?)  
Then Lord have mercy on his soul.—  
(Ladies, I'll venture for the *vole*.) 230  
Six deans, they say, must bear the pall,  
(I wish I knew what *King* to call.)  
Madam, your husband will attend  
The funeral of so good a friend ?'  
' No, Madam, 'tis a shocking sight  
And he's engaged to-morrow night.  
My Lady *Club* will take it ill  
If he should fail her at quadrille.  
He loved the Dean—(I lead a heart)  
But dearest friends, they say, must part. 240  
His time was come, he ran his race,  
We hope he's in a better place.'  
Why do we grieve that friends should die ?  
No loss more easy to supply.  
One year is past, a different scene,  
No further mention of the Dean !  
Who now, alas, no more is miss'd  
Than if he never did exist.  
Where's now this favourite of Apollo ?  
Departed ;—and his works must follow, 250  
Must undergo the common fate,

His kind of wit is out of date.

Some country squire to Lintot goes,  
Inquires for 'Swift in Verse and Prose.'  
Says Lintot, 'I have heard the name,  
He died a year ago.' 'The same.'

He searches all the shop in vain.

'Sir, you may find them in Duck-lane,

I sent them with a load of books

Last Monday, to the pastrycook's.

260

To fancy they could live a year !

I find you're but a stranger here.

The Dean was famous in his time,

And had a kind of knack at rhyme.

His way of writing now is past,

The town has got a better taste.

I keep no antiquated stuff

But spick and span I have enough ;

Pray do but give me leave to shew 'em.

Here's Colley Cibber's birthday-poem.

270

This ode you never yet have seen

By Stephen Duck, upon the queen.

Then here's a letter, finely penn'd,

Against the Craftsman and his friend ;

It clearly shows that all reflection

On ministers is disaffection.

Next, here's Sir Robert's vindication

And Mr. Henley's last oration.

The hawkers have not got them yet,

Your honour please to buy a set ?

280

Here's Woolston's tracts, the twelfth edition,

'Tis read by every politician.

The country members, when in town,



To all their boroughs send them down.  
You never met a thing so smart,  
The courtiers have them all by heart.  
Those maids of honour who can read,  
Are taught to use them for their creed.  
The reverend author's good intention  
Hath been rewarded with a pension. 290  
He doth an honour to his gown,  
By bravely running priestcraft down ;  
He shews, as sure as God's in Gloucester,  
That Moses was a grand imposter,  
That all his miracles were cheats,  
Perform'd as jugglers do their feats.  
The church had never such a writer,  
A shame he hath not got a mitre ! '

Suppose me dead, and then suppose  
A club assembled at The Rose, 300  
Where, from discourse of this and that,  
I grow the subject of their chat.  
And while they toss my name about,  
With favour some, and some without,  
One, quite indifferent in the cause,  
My character impartial draws.

' The Dean, if we believe report,  
Was never ill-received at court.  
As for his works in verse and prose,  
I own myself no judge of those ; 310  
Nor can I tell what critics thought 'em,  
But this I know, all people bought 'em.  
As with a moral view design'd  
To cure the vices of mankind,  
His vein, ironically grave,

Exposed the fool and lash'd the knave.  
 To steal a hint was never known  
 But what he writ was all his own.

• He never thought an honour done him

Because a duke was proud to own him 320

Would rather slip aside and choose

^ To talk with wits in dirty shoes.

Despised the fools with stars and garters

So often seen caressing Chartres.

He never courted men in station

Nor persons held in admiration,

Of no man's greatness was afraid

Because he sought for no man's aid.

Though trusted long in great affairs

He gave himself no haughty airs. ' 330

Without regarding private ends

Spent all his credit for his friends ;

And only chose the wise and good :

No flatterers, no allies in blood,

But succour'd virtue in distress

And seldom fail'd of good success,

As numbers in their hearts must own

Who, but for him, had been unknown.

With princes kept a due decorum,

But never stood in awe before 'em. 340

He follow'd David's lesson just,—

“ In princes never put thy trust.”—

And, would you make him truly sour,

Provoke him with a slave in power.

The Irish senate if you named

With what impatience he declaim'd !

Fair LIBERTY was all his cry,

For her he stood prepar'd to die,  
For her he boldly stood alone,  
For her he oft exposed his own. 350  
Two kingdoms, just as faction led,  
Had set a price upon his head,  
But not a traitor could be found  
To sell him for six hundred pound.

Had he but spared his tongue and pen  
He might have rose like other men,  
But power was never in his thought  
And wealth he valued not a groat.  
Ingratitude he often found  
And pitied those who meant the wound, 360  
But kept the tenor of his mind  
To merit well of human kind ;  
Nor made a sacrifice of those  
Who still were true, to please his foes.  
He labour'd many a fruitless hour  
To reconcile his friends in power ;  
Saw mischief by a faction brewing  
While they pursued each other's ruin,  
But finding vain was all his care  
He left the Court in mere despair. 370

And oh, how short are human schemes !  
Here ended all our golden dreams.  
What St. John's skill in state affairs,  
What Ormond's valour, Oxford's cares,  
To save their sinking country lent  
Was all destroy'd by one event.  
Too soon that precious life was ended  
On which alone our weal depended,  
When up a dangerous faction starts

With wrath and vengeance in their hearts, 380  
By solemn league and covenant bound  
To ruin, slaughter and confound,  
To turn religion to a fable  
And make the government a Babel,  
Pervert the laws, disgrace the gown,  
Corrupt the senate, rob the crown,  
To sacrifice Old England's glory  
And make her infamous in story.  
When such a tempest shook the land  
How could unguarded Virtue stand ! 390  
With horror, grief, despair, the Dean  
Beheld the dire destructive scene.  
His friends in exile, or the Tower,  
Himself within the frown of power.  
Pursued by base envenom'd pens  
Far to the land of slaves and fens,  
A servile race in folly nursed  
Who truckle most, when treated worst.  
By innocence and resolution  
He bore continual persecution. 400  
While numbers to preferment rose  
Whose merits were—to be his foes.  
When even his own familiar friends,  
Intent upon their private ends,  
Like renegadoes now he feels  
Against him lifting up their heels.  
The Dean did, by his pen, defeat  
An infamous destructive cheat,  
Taught fools their interest how to know  
And gave them arms to ward the blow. 410  
Envy has own'd it was his doing

•

To save that hapless land from ruin,  
While they who at the steerage stood  
And reap'd the profit, sought his blood.

To save them from their evil fate  
In him was held a crime of state.  
A wicked monster on the bench  
Whose fury blood could never quench,  
As vile and profligate a villain  
As modern Scroggs or old Tresilian, 420  
Who long all justice had discarded,  
Nor fear'd he God, nor man regarded,  
Vow'd on the Dean his rage to vent  
And make him of his zeal repent.  
But Heaven his innocence defends,  
The grateful people stand his friends :  
Not strains of law nor judge's frown  
Nor topics brought to please the crown,  
Nor witness hired, nor jury pick'd,  
Prevail to bring him in convict. 430

In exile, with a steady heart,  
He spent his life's declining part,  
Where folly, pride, and faction sway,  
Remote from St. John, Pope, and Gay.  
His friendships there, to few confined,  
Were always of the middling kind ;  
No fools of rank, a mongrel breed ;  
Who fain would pass for lords indeed ;  
Where titles give no right or power,  
And peerage is a wither'd flower. 440  
He would have held it a disgrace  
If such a wretch had known his face.  
On rural squires, that kingdom's bane,

He vented oft his wrath in vain.  
On (bankrupt) squires to market brought :  
Who sell their souls and (votes) for nought :  
The (wretches still) go joyful back,  
To (rob) the Church, their tenants rack,  
Go snacks with (English absentees),  
And, keep the peace, to pick up fees : 450  
In every job to have a share,  
A jail or (turnpike) to repair :  
And turn the (course) for public roads  
Commodious to their own abodes.

Perhaps I may allow the Dean  
Had too much satire in his vein,  
And seem'd determined not to starve it,  
Because no age could more deserve it.  
Yet malice never was his aim,  
He lash'd the vice but spar'd the name. 460  
No individual could resent  
Where thousands equally were meant.  
His satire points at no defect,  
But what all mortals may correct,  
For he abhorr'd that senseless tribe  
Who call it humour when they gibe.  
He spared a hump or crooked nose  
Whose owners set not up for beaux.  
True genuine dulness moved his pity  
Unless it offer'd to be witty. 470  
Those who their ignorance confest  
He ne'er offended with a jest,  
But laugh'd to hear an idiot quote  
A verse from Horace, learn'd by rote.  
He knew a hundred pleasing stories

With all the turns of Whigs and Tories,  
Was cheerful to his dying day,  
And friends would let him have his way.

He gave the little wealth he had  
To build a house for fools and mad, 480  
And shew'd by one satiric touch  
No nation wanted it so much.  
That kingdom he hath left his debtor :  
I wish it soon may have a better.'

## NOTES

### A TALE OF A TUB

P. 2, l. 18. **the person** : Time.

P. 2, l. 30. **this insolent** : this insolent man.

P. 3, l. 30. **maître du palais**. Towards the close of the Merovingian dynasty the whole power rested in the hands of the Mayors of the Palace. They were originally officers of the royal household through whom petitions were presented to the king. Swift describes briefly how they rose to power in *The Conduct of the Allies*.

P. 3, l. 31. **hors de page** : out of guardianship.

P. 4, l. 12. **his** : Time's.

P. 5, l. 1. **uncontrollable** : universal. Swift uses the word in the same sense in the title of one of his pamphlets, *Maxims Controlled in Ireland*, where he means maxims, normally considered universal but not applying to Ireland.

P. 5, l. 21. **If I should venture in a windy day**, etc. Swift evidently had in mind the passage in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act IV, Sc. 14).

'Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish ;

A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,

A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,

A forked mountain, or blue promontory

With trees upon't, that nod unto the world,

And mock our eyes with air : thou hast seen these signs,

They are black vesper's pageants.'

P. 6, l. 4. **in return of** : in exchange for.

P. 6, l. 16. Dryden published his translation of Virgil in 1697 and died in 1700. Unless Swift's *Dedication* was written some years before its publication, the reference is in singularly bad taste, and shows that Swift still harboured resentment against his kinsman, Dryden, for his unfavourable criticism of his early poetic efforts.

P. 6, l. 19. **Nahum Tate** (1652-1715). Chiefly remembered, along with Brady, for his metrical version of the Psalms. Befriended by Dryden, he assisted him in the composition of the Second Part of *Absalom and Achitophel*. He was Poet Laureate.

P. 6, l. 24. **Tom Durfey**. A prolific verse-writer of the day, best known for his *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, a collection of humorous ballads commended by Steele.



P. 6, l. 26. **Mr. Rymer** (1638-1713). This writer, whose best work was done in his capacity as historiographer, probably evoked the dislike of Swift because of the pamphlets he wrote in the controversy about ancient and modern learning.

P. 6, l. 27. **Mr. Dennis**. John Dennis (1657-1733) was a poet, a dramatist and a critic. Much of his criticism was arrogant and intemperate, and he attacked many of the best-known writers of his day. He thus became a butt for satire on the part of many of the wits.

P. 6, l. 28. **Dr. Bentley** (1662-1742). One of the greatest of English classical scholars. He was Master of Trinity, Cambridge, and Royal Librarian. See note to *The Battle of the Books*.

P. 7, l. 3. **William Wotton** (1666-1726). Another great scholar of the day, associated with Bentley in the controversy centring round *The Battle of the Books*.

P. 7, l. 4. **A friend of your governor**. Sir William Temple. Did this paragraph suggest to Oliver Goldsmith the character of Beau Tibbs?

P. 9, l. 9. **Duchess d'Argent, Madame de Grands Titres, Countess d'Orgueil**. Money, Great Titles, Pride.

P. 9, l. 20. **Locket's**. A noted tavern near Charing Cross.

P. 9, l. 20. **Will's**. A famous coffee-house in Covent Garden, where the leading literary men of the day usually met.

P. 9, l. 26. **sub dio** : under the heavens, in the open air.

P. 10, l. 12. **a sort of idol** : the tailor.

P. 10, l. 30. **Cercopithecus** : Greek word for 'long-tailed ape.' The meaning seems to be that the tailor's goose destroys the vermin supposed (unjustly, as modern observers tell us) to be dear to monkeys.

P. 11, l. 6. **the universe to be a large suit of clothes**. There are many minor points of resemblance between this philosophy of clothes and that of Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*. The scope of Carlyle's criticism is, however, much vaster than that of Swift's, the latter aiming rather at satire than comprehensive philosophical treatment.

P. 11, l. 13. **water-tabby** : a coarser kind of waved or watered silk.

P. 11, l. 18. **micro-coat** : a little coat, a play on the word, microcosm, or little world, as man has been called by philosophers.

P. 12, l. 2. **proprieties** : properties.

P. 12, l. 19. **ex traduce** : from the original stock.

P. 14, l. 5. **ruelle** : the bed-side. At the Court of Louis XV the salon was often held here.

P. 14, l. 13. *The Rose*. A tavern in Covent Garden, famous as being the place where the duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun in 1712 was arranged. It will be remembered that Thackeray introduced this incident into *Henry Esmond*.

P. 15, l. 13. Q.V.C. : 'quibusdam veteribus codicibus,' some ancient manuscripts.

P. 16, l. 14. nuncupatory and scriptory : spoken and written.

P. 20, l. 23. fonde : foundation.

P. 22, l. 5. whispering-office : the confessional.

P. 22, l. 9. repeating poets : poets who read their works in public.

P. 24, l. 13. The two Latin quotations are from Horace's *Art of Poetry*. Horace is describing the efforts of the painter who couples the head of a man with the neck of a horse, invests them both with feathers ('varias inducere plumas'), and then presents a figure which is a maid above, but ends in a hideous fish below ('atrum desinat in piscem').

P. 24, l. 16. fishes' tails : refers to the ending of the Papal Bulls, 'sub signo piscatoris', under the seal of the fisherman, i.e. St. Peter.

P. 24, l. 19. naughty boys : kings who opposed him or earned his displeasure.

P. 24, l. 28. coil : tumult.

P. 24, l. 29. pulveris exigui jactu : 'by the scattering of a little dust.' This is the method recommended in Virgil's *Georgics*, (iv. 87) for the allaying of tumult among the bees.

P. 25, l. 4. bull-beggars : the equivalent of our modern *bogey*s.

P. 26, l. 4. vere adepti : really experts.

P. 27, l. 9. boutade : whim.

P. 28, l. 18. take me along with you : let me share in this jest.

P. 30, l. 1. great and famous rupture : the Reformation.

P. 30, l. 19. Chinese waggons. These are the 'cany waggons light' which the Chinese 'drive with sails and wind' (*Far. Lost*, iii. 437). They were known to Englishmen through the tales of travellers.

P. 30, l. 21. house of lime and stone. This was the chapel of Loreto, which was supposed to have been brought from Nazareth to Italy.

#### THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

P. 34, l. 18. gall and copperas : both used in making ink. *Copperas* is a sulphate of iron.

P. 36, l. 4. **polemics** : controversial writings.

P. 36, l. 31. **the guardian of the regal library**. Bentley was appointed librarian of the Royal library of St. James in 1694.

P. 36, l. 32. **chiefly renowned for his humanity**. A good example of Swift's sarcasm. Boyle, in the Preface to his edition of the *Letters of Phalaris*, says that he was refused a manuscript by Bentley 'pro solita humanitate sua', i.e. in accordance with his customary humanity (or courtesy, as the word really means). In translating the word by 'humanity' Swift and his friends added to the sting by implying that Bentley was not only churlish but a savage too.

P. 37, l. 3. **two of the ancient chiefs** : Phalaris and Aesop, whose works Bentley proved to be spurious, in his appendix to Wotton's *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*.

P. 38, l. 1. **Seven Wise Masters** : a popular class-book of the day, much in use as a book for the moral instruction of children ('raik).

P. 40, l. 16. **Beelzebub** : the god of flies.

P. 41, l. 2. **pruned** : cleaned his wings.

P. 43, l. 17. **Bentley, the most deformed of all the moderns**. 'It is not easy to account for the exaggerated bitterness of Swift's attack upon Bentley, except on the theory that his hostility nursed itself on its own heat. Bentley had not attacked Swift personally; he belonged to the political party to which Swift at this time ostensibly belonged; and it seems strange that Bentley's arraignment of Temple, which certainly did not exceed the limits then common in literary controversy, should have provoked such wrath in Swift. The strong language used by others of the participants in the fight did not prevent subsequent friendship' (Craik). It is often easier, however, to be more truculent and bitter on behalf of a friend than on one's own behalf, especially on a theme that has no direct bearing on one's opinions and beliefs.

P. 43, l. 22. **Etesian** : periodical.

P. 45, l. 14. **Aldrovandus** : an Italian naturalist of the sixteenth century who published a work on natural history, on which he spent sixty years. Swift here alludes to this work as his tomb.

P. 45, l. 19. **As when two mongrel curs, etc.** : an obvious parody of a classical simile.

#### THE BICKERSTAFF PAMPHLETS

**Title**. Faulkner has the following note in the Dublin edition of 1735. 'It is said that the author, when he had writ the following paper, and being at a loss what name to prefix to it, passing through

Long Acre, observed a sign over a house where a locksmith dwelt, and found the name Bickerstaff written under it; which being a name somewhat uncommon, he chose to call himself Isaac Bickerstaff. This name was sometime afterward made use of by Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Addison, in the *Tatlers*; in which papers, as well as many of the *Spectators*, it is well known, that the author had a considerable part.

P. 51, l. 19. *Philomaths*: lovers of learning.

P. 51, l. 25. *Gadbury*: an Oxford tailor who ran an almanack similar to Partridge's.

P. 53, l. 10. *miscarriage at Toulon*. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 1707 by Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy, with the help of the English fleet under Sir Cloudesly Shovel, to reduce Toulon.

P. 53, l. 15. *Almanza*. Spain was recovered for Philip by a victory of Marshal Berwick at Almanza, 1707.

P. 56, l. 19. *Dr. Case*: for many years a noted practitioner in physic and astrology. Both he and Mrs. Kirleus were famous London quacks at the time Swift was writing.

P. 63, l. 11. *Grub-street*. This was a street in London where booksellers' hacks and poor writers lived, and the term is applied in contempt to any mean literary production.

## LETTERS

P. 65, l. 16. *Captain Pratt*. An Irish official who attended to Swift's investments.

P. 66, l. 29. *Malmesbury*. Addison's parliamentary constituency.

P. 79, l. 23. *I nunc, et versus. . .*: 'Go now, and rehearse tuneful verses in private'; Horace, *Epistles* II. ii. 76.

P. 81, l. 2. *Perditur haec inter . . .*: 'Among these occupations the unhappy man's day is wasted'; Horace, *Satires* II. vi. 59.

P. 82, l. 21. *the poem you mention*: *Cadenus and Vanessa*.

P. 88, l. 25. *Barber*: one of Swift's printers.

P. 95, l. 11. *PMD*. This stands for Presto (Swift), Stella and Dingley.

P. 97, l. 24. *gambling*: rambling.

P. 108, l. 27. *as hope saved*: as I hope to be saved.

P. 115, l. 16. *waist*: Swift's spelling was 'wast', though the modern way is as Stella wrote it.

P. 116, l. 22. **he dare not stir out but on Sundays.** Debtors could not be arrested on Sundays.

P. 116, l. 23. **second edition.** The pamphlet referred to is *The Conduct of the Allies*, published on the 27th of November. It ran through four editions in a week.

#### THE CONDUCT OF THE ALLIES

P. 129, l. 19. **Treaty at Gertruydenburg.** After the battle of Malplaquet negotiations for peace were begun at Gertruydenburg, a village near Dordrecht. One of the terms which were to provide a basis for discussing peace was that Louis should, by force, expel his son from the Spanish throne. Although Louis naturally refused to accept this condition, the English envoys reported in England that all the preliminary conditions for peace had been agreed upon. These negotiations are again referred to below as *a mock treaty*.

P. 131, l. 11. **Duke of Schomberg :** a soldier who fought for William III, and was killed at the Battle of the Boyne (1689).

P. 131, l. 17. **bubbles :** an eighteenth-century term for impostures (*e.g.*, the South Sea Bubble), and also for their victims.

P. 132, l. 15. **Duchess :** the Duchess of Marlborough, who exercised a remarkable influence at the Court of Queen Anne. Her influence began to wane about the year 1702, her place being taken by Mrs. Masham.

P. 135, l. 27. **Prince of Denmark's death :** the husband of Queen Anne. He died in 1708.

#### THE DRAPIER'S LETTERS

P. 139, l. 20. **a little book.** This refers to *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* (1720).

P. 143, l. 8. **bere :** a coarse barley used for brewing.

P. 143, l. 32. **'Squire Conolly :** Speaker of the House of Commons. As he had been in favour of the coinage, there is all the more point in Swift's citing his case.

P. 144, l. 19. **pistole :** a Spanish coin worth about 16s.

P. 146, l. 24. **The Mirror of Justice.** An old authority on early English law.

P. 147, l. 2. **lawful or true metal, and unlawful or false metal.** Coke classifies gold and silver as lawful and true, and copper, tin, and brass as unlawful and false.

## POEMS

## BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

The story of Baucis and Philemon is told in the 8th book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but Swift replaces the Jupiter and Mercury of Ovid by the two brother hermits.

P. 190, l. 192. **colberteen** : 'A kind of lace, from Colbert, a superintendent of the French king's manufactures' (Craik).

## DR. SWIFT TO MR. POPE

P. 192, l. 25. **Sherlock** : Dean of St. Paul's.

## ON THE DEATH OF DR. SWIFT

P. 195, l. 83. **that old vertigo**. This is the disease from which Swift is believed to have suffered. Giddiness was one of its chief symptoms.

P. 199, l. 192. **Bob**. Sir Robert Walpole.

P. 199, l. 194. **Will**. William Pulteney.

P. 199, l. 197. **Curl**. A pirate bookseller of the day.

P. 199, l. 200. **Tibbalds, Moore, and Cibber**. Tibbalds stands for Theobald, the Shakespearean commentator, and the original hero of Pope's *Dunciad*. Moore, the writer of a comedy, was also pilloried in Pope's poem, and Cibber, at the time Poet Laureate, had the honour of appearing as hero in the same work.

P. 199, l. 207. **Poor Pope will grieve a month, etc.** Actually all three died before Swift.

P. 200, l. 230. **vole**. 'In the game of Ombre the vole is the play which may gain for the dealer all the tricks or may leave him a heavy loser' (Craik).

P. 201, l. 253. **Lintot** : a well-known bookseller.

P. 201, l. 257. **Duck-lane**. A street in Smithfields full of second-rate bookshops.

P. 201, l. 272. **Stephen Duck** : a rhymester of the period who enjoyed for a time Court patronage.

P. 201, l. 278. **Mr. Henley** : a clergyman, who gave up his living to instruct the world in theology and other branches of learning by lecturing.

P. 201, l. 281. **Woolston** : a freethinker of the period.

P. 204, l. 377. **Too soon that precious life was ended** : i.e. of Queen Anne, the bulwark of the Tories.

## HELPS TO FURTHER STUDY

1. To understand Swift's works it is necessary to study the political history of England during his lifetime. You will find a very entertaining account of the social life of the period in Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, and there are many good books dealing with Marlborough and his wars.

2. So many books have been written about Swift, each from its own particular point of view, that great care has to be taken in the selection of them. A very good book to begin with is Sir Leslie Stephen's *Swift* (English Men of Letters). For fuller and more detailed information, read Sir Henry Craik's *Life of Jonathan Swift* (2 vols., Macmillan). Johnson in his short *Life of Swift* is not always fair to his subject, and Thackeray's picture of Swift in his *English Humourists* is not quite accurate or free from prejudice. Among modern writings on Swift, you should read the chapter devoted to him in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, and there is a well-balanced account of the subject in G. Moriarty's *Dean Swift and His Writings*.

3. The best way to learn about Swift is to read as many of his writings as you can. Begin with *Gulliver's Travels* and end with his *Journal to Stella*.

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